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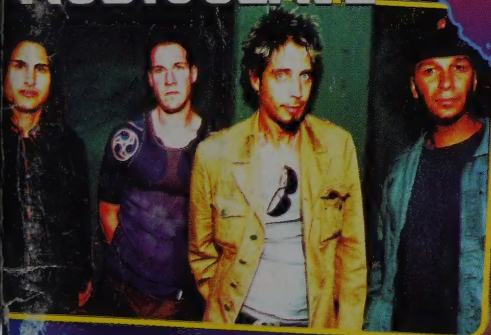
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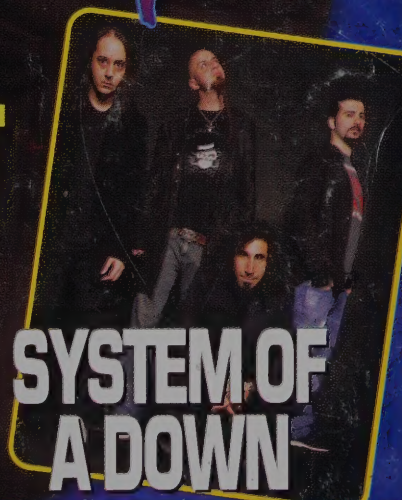
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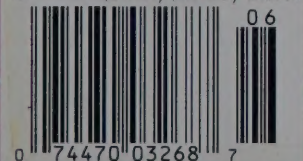
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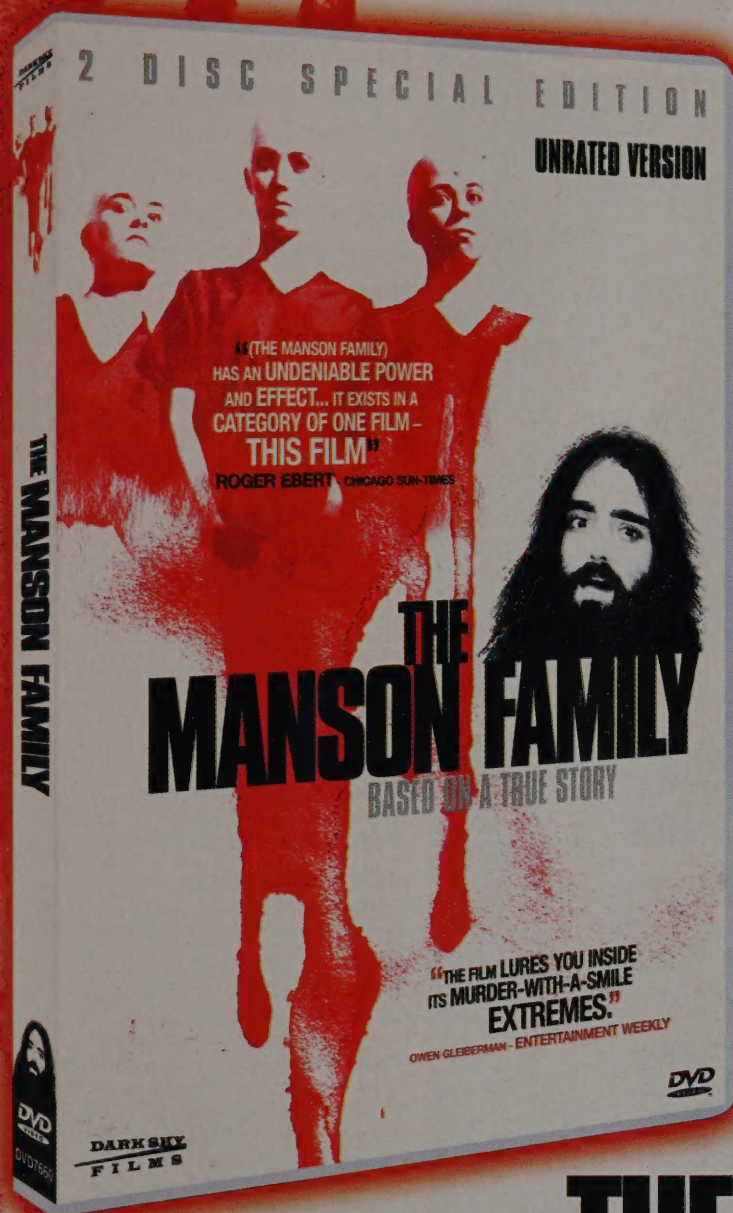
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WE READ YOUR

MAIL

METAL UPRISING

Metal lives! I've been a metal fan for more than 20 years, so I've seen 'em come, and I've seen 'em go. What is very exciting for me is to witness the rise of this generation of bands, and to note how many of them have grasped the true ideals of metal. I love Mastodon because they remind me of Slayer, with a touch of Iron Maiden thrown in for good measure.

Rick
Red Wing, MN

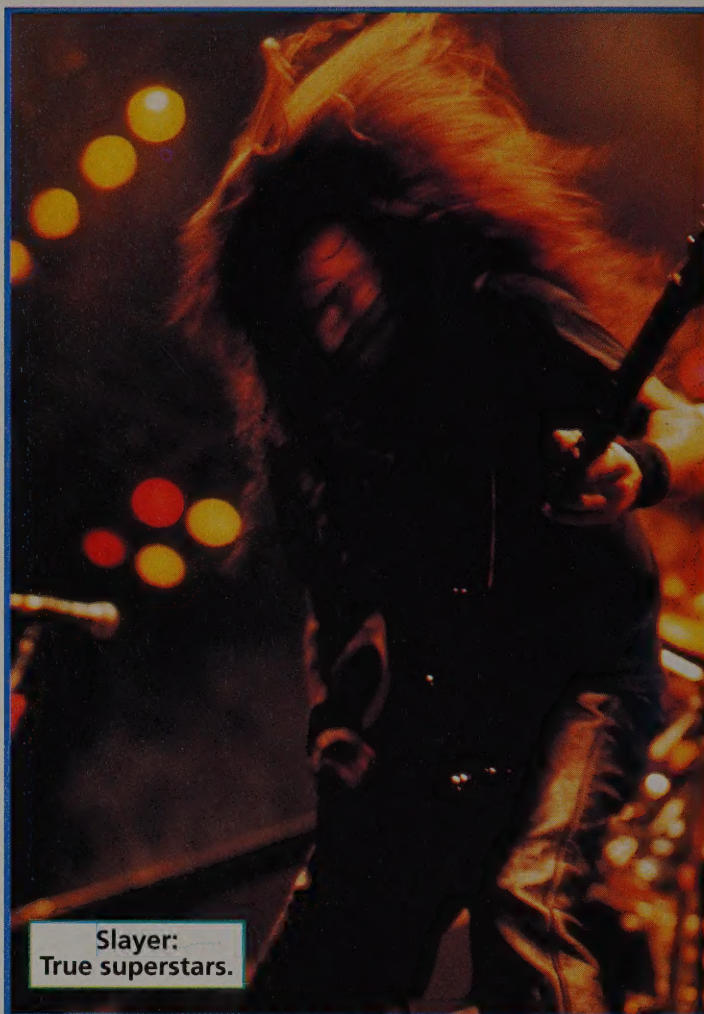
I'm confused by **Hit Parader**. A few months ago you had us all believing that there was a Hard Rock Renaissance going on thanks to bands like the Darkness and Jet. Now you'd like us to jump on the "underground" metal bandwagon and start singing the praise of Meshuggah, Dimmu Borgir and Hatebreed. Maybe all of this is going on at the same time. But to my way of thinking, metal can't be represented by the likes of the Darkness and Meshuggah at the same time. They come from totally opposite ends of the metal spectrum.

Cas
Palo Alto, CA

Where does all this talk of metal revolution and evolution leave a band like Mudvayne? They're heavy enough, smart enough and talented enough to compete with any group out there, but I fear that they may fall by the way-side due to their theatrical roots. Please people, give Mudvayne a chance. They can help lead metal to the promised land... if only we all give them the chance.

Brad
Lexington, KY

I want to know why the people involved with the so-called Underground Uprising all need to be so unattractive? No offense to the members of Lamb of God or Shadows Fall, but they're not about to land on the cover of *Gentlemen's Quarterly* either for their appearance or their clothing. Don't those fine gentlemen realize that it's 2005... not 1975? I remember a time—especially in the



Slayer:
True superstars.

'80s— when rock musicians took pride in their appearance. Nirvana changed all that when they came along, and the rock world has yet to recover. How sad.

Milly
Seattle, WA

KINGS OF METAL

Thank you for your recent *Kings of Metal* special issue. I like the way you presented very in-depth stories and interviews with the most important bands and figures in metal history. Sometimes I find **Hit Parader** articles to be too short; just as I'm warming up to what I'm reading, it's over. That was not a problem this time. You provided ample space for the most important stories in hard rock history to be told in all their glory.

Tim
Detroit, MI

Your *Kings of Metal* issue was the best ever! I learned a lot about Zeppelin, Sabbath and Priest, as well as reading about some of metal's most exciting young



Linkin Park: Taking BIG chances.

Attention beginning and struggling guitarists!

"The Music Industry's 'Secret Weapon' Guitar Wizard Finally Reveals His Embarrassingly-Easy Short-Cuts That Can Take Anyone From Raw Rookie To Stage-Ready 'Get All The Girls' Guitarist In Just One Short Weekend!"

When this famous teacher talks, people who wanna rock *pay attention* — and he's staking his industry-wide reputation on the fact that he can take someone with **NO** previous skills, **NO** musical experience, and **NO** clue how to even tune a guitar... and have you ready to play and jam *on a complete set list of smokin' hot songs...* in just a few focused hours! Don't believe it? Fine... check it out for yourself for **FREE**, if you choose...

(Dateline: Visalia, CA) -- Tony Burnett is well-known on the "inside" of the music business. He's the "**secret weapon**" studio guitarist that many major artists demand (and will *delay* recording until he's available)... and he's also the most sought-after *teacher* in the country.

Why? Cuz he's earned a vicious reputation as the "**Master Shredder**", from his work with the hot bands **XYZ** and **Digital Clowns** (who opened for huge acts throughout the early nineties). He's jammed onstage with **Yngwie Malmsteen**, hung with **Joe Satriani** and **John Petrucci**, gets swarmed by fans at **NAMM** shows.

More important, he's one of those rare geniuses who knows how to **TEACH** others how to become master guitarists in the *shortest time humanly possible*. (His private "work-shop" lessons go for \$1,000 each, and he's *booked solid* for the next two years.)

This "**super-fast learning shortcut**" of Tony's really *pisses off* other teachers. They earn money by having students come *back* for tons of lessons... and the fact that Tony spends just **ONE LESSON** with a rookie, and within days that kid starts playing like a pro with *ten years experience*... well, it's just shaking up the entire teaching industry. "Old school" teachers, who *refuse* to believe you can learn guitar fast, feel threatened.

Hey — if you've got two or three years to slowly learn the basics, and then maybe learn some intermediate stuff, and *then* maybe start jamming with friends... go for it. Good luck.

However... if you're *hot* to get started, and you **DON'T** want to wait around to get **good** (and you don't want to waste time on boring *practice*)... then this is the best news you're ever going to hear in your

life. Because every second you spend with your guitar — is going to be the most exciting and amazing musical experience you'll ever have.

You see, Tony has been taking kids with *no music training whatsoever*... and turning them into stage-ready guitarists literally almost *overnight*. The guy who gets **maximum respect** from other musicians... and who gets **maximum attention from all the girls**. (Warning: Your buddies will start to *hate* you. Getting good at guitar will change your life forever.)

And he's been doing it over and over for *years*. He's *proven* this shortcut works like *magic*. For almost anyone who can hold a guitar.

But here's the really good news: You don't have to *wait* for an opening in Tony's private guitar workshop... *and you don't have to shell out \$1,000 for it, either.*

In fact... if you act right now... Tony will be your "private" virtual guitar coach, and teach you *everything* he knows about getting really good, really fast... and... **you won't risk a PENNY in the deal.**

And let's be clear about what Tony's promising:

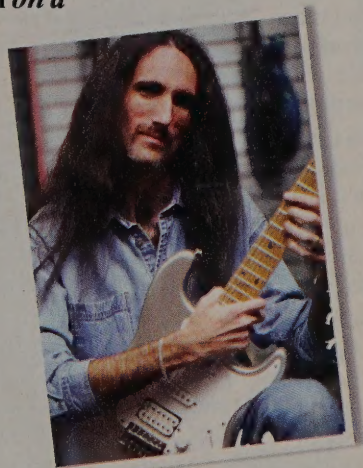
- You do not need any prior music training.
- You do not need any "talent".
- You do not need an "ear" or any natural ability.

In fact... *you don't even need to know how to tune a guitar!*

Just bring your axe, your *desire* to be a guitar player... and Tony will take it from there. *Faster than you ever dreamed possible.*

Here's just a taste of what you're about to feast on:

- Learn the shortcut secrets of *instantly* playing 99% of all rock, hard rock and



*Master shredder Tony Burnette developed a stunning "quick-learn" package **PROVEN** to teach beginners the secret short-cuts to wicked guitar playing **OVERNIGHT**.*

new wave tunes out there. (Most songs are *stunningly* simple, once you know the pro-level *tricks*.)

- The secret to *forcing* your hands to start ripping out **killer riffs** — quickly... easily... and with the *speed and precision* of a seasoned rocker! (Proven secrets that astonish even veteran players.)
- *Skip* years of frustration by learning the **ONE** power chord used by most hard rock and metal guitarists! (**In 2 minutes, using 2 fingers, you'll know how to play over 200 rock songs!**)
- Move like *lightning* through the 3 stages of guitar mastery: From "no clue at all" to "this is *easy*" in just a few short hours... and then on through "impress all your friends to the point you *scare* them", straight to "ready for the stage". (You'll be jamming with other musicians *before* other rookies have even learned their first song!)
- *Instantly* learn the "insider" techniques behind Nirvana, AFI, Led Zeppelin, Blink 182, The Darkness, Trapt, and Ozzy Osbourne tunes (just

to name a few) — super-popular stuff that will give you smoking “audience appeal” *right off the bat!*

And a *ton* more. **How to start writing your own songs, right away.** Simple tactics used by the experts that’ll make you *sound like a pro* every time you pick up a guitar... even if you use cheap equipment. **How to find other cool musicians to play with... and how to start a band that gets listened to.** Fast ways to start playing popular songs immediately, and sound *great* — by “dialing in” the tones of the most famous guitarists. (Get “clean” sounds like Queensryche ballads, or “dirty” sounds just like AC/DC, no matter what kind of guitar or amp you have.)

And more. All *short-cutted* for you by the man who has changed the lives of more rookie guitarists than anyone else in the history of the instrument.

This is an amazing opportunity to get “private” mentoring from the hottest and most respected guitar teacher around. It’s just unheard of for a pro of Tony’s fame and stature to offer his best and most effective secrets for a “test drive” like this.

Tony agreed to go into the studio and put his amazing “One Lesson Short-Cut From Rookie To Stage-Ready Guitarist” session on DVD and charge just \$69 for it. It also comes with a complete workbook — with all music in TAB so you don’t even have to know how to read music. This means you can get the *same* instruction others are paying *big bucks* for... *without* waiting years to get that lesson!

Even better, with DVDs, you can “menu” through it anytime you need to, and space the lesson out to match your schedule. You can blow through it all in one night, or work through it more slowly. Your choice. This guarantees you learn it all, at your pace.

The best part is that you can *test-drive* this amazing instruction **without risk**. Because you get a...

**100% Money Back Guarantee
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That means... if Tony doesn’t **PROVE** he can make you a “stage ready” guitarist as fast as he’s promised... you can simply return the DVD lesson for a full refund. And that means you will have seen the entire lesson...

For FREE!

Here’s how to get in on this no-risk offer: *You must hurry.* Tony has allowed us to dupe a small number of these DVD lessons. (His manager insists he keep a lid on how many rookies get this instruction, so the price of his *personal* lessons

remain high. That’s fair. Tony has to make a living.)

To get your package rushed to you, just call **1-800-316-5871** today, and ask for “**Tony Burnett’s Short-Cut Lesson To Guitar Mastery**”. (That number is OHP Direct’s *main office* here in Visalia, California — we’ve been providing lessons for students for over 15 years, with a worldwide reputation of being a company you can rely on. That’s why Tony chose us for this project.) You can use your credit card. The price, again, is just \$69 — **the biggest bargain you’ll ever see in music.**

Or, if you’d rather pay by check or money order (payable to OHP), just fill out the “Priority Order Form” below and mail it in with your payment to: **OHP, 606 E. Acequia Ave., Visalia, CA 93292.**

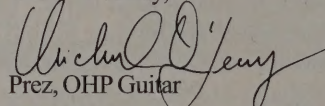
Either way — your package will be rushed out to you immediately. And you don’t risk a penny with your year-long guarantee.

PLUS... you *also* get a bonus DVD, revealing the exact way Tony teaches his own students these secrets. It’s a special peek into Tony’s *secret teaching studio*... and it will help you “see” exactly how *other* rookies learn this stuff so darn fast.

And... **you get to KEEP this bonus DVD**, no matter what. Even if you return the main DVD lesson later for a refund. Tony insists that you get maximum value... and he wants you to have this bonus as his *gift*. Just for giving his “short-cut” lesson a test-drive.

We expect to *sell out* this small batch of DVD packages almost immediately. So you must hurry. Thank you.

“Doc” O’Leary,


Prez, OHP Guitar

P.S. Wait — I have *another* free bonus

for you, if you call now. Tony has done a CD that he calls “**The Hotshot’s Skills Booster**”. On it, he explains his *advanced* secrets of putting your guitar skills on **STEREOS**... so you just *keep getting better and better* every time you pick up your instrument. This keeps you excited, and gets you where you wanna be even *faster*.

This “must-have” CD (worth \$29) is yours **FREE**, but *only* if you call right now. Don’t put this off — if you’ve ever dreamed of finally being able to mount the stage with your guitar and *blow other musicians away*, here’s the best opportunity you’ll ever see. Just remember that Tony is keeping this release limited, *so don’t wait*.

**Listen to what guys who KNOW
are saying about
Tony Burnett:**

“If you want to get real good — real fast... Tony has all the short-cuts. It’s all laid out, step-by-step.” **Ryan Jones, beginning guitarist** - “Wow! It doesn’t get any easier than this. Start playing songs instantly... My friends are starting to hang-out just to hear me play. That’s cool.” **Kevin Stevens, San Gabriel Valley** - “This guy is an amazing rock guitarist and teacher.” **Loren Scott, Pro-Drummer** - “This stuff was cool and a lot easier than I thought.” **R.J. Pimental, San Francisco, CA** - “I was tired of playing the same old tunes over and over, bored out of my mind... it was so easy, I learned 5 new riffs in 15-min., This DVD works!” **Dean Noble, Central CA** - “Don’t start out with bad habits — poor technique. Listen to Tony and he’ll have you jammin’ to the coolest songs in no time.” **Tim Murphy, Seattle Area** - “Tony is definitely an awesome teacher... a real musician.” **Wes Rippin, Music Instructor** - “I’m so jacked-up excited right now, I can’t put my guitar down... so amazed at how easy most songs are to play. Tony make it clear — simple & Fun!” **Jeff Bloom, Novice guitarist** - “This approach is so fresh, you’ll unlock your hidden talent in a flash!” **Steve Alvaro, San Diego Area**

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WE READ YOUR MAIL

bands like Slipknot. I wish you had given a little more space to my favorite band, Metallica, but at least you included them in there.

Slim
Hartford, CN

Hey dudes, thanks for the effort, but no thanks! Couldn't you have given us something newer than an interview with Axl Rose that's 12 years old? I mean I was 8 when you spoke to him!! I realize that he's a legend and that he doesn't do much talking these days, but 12 year old news isn't new at all... ya know what I mean?

Devin
Denton, GA

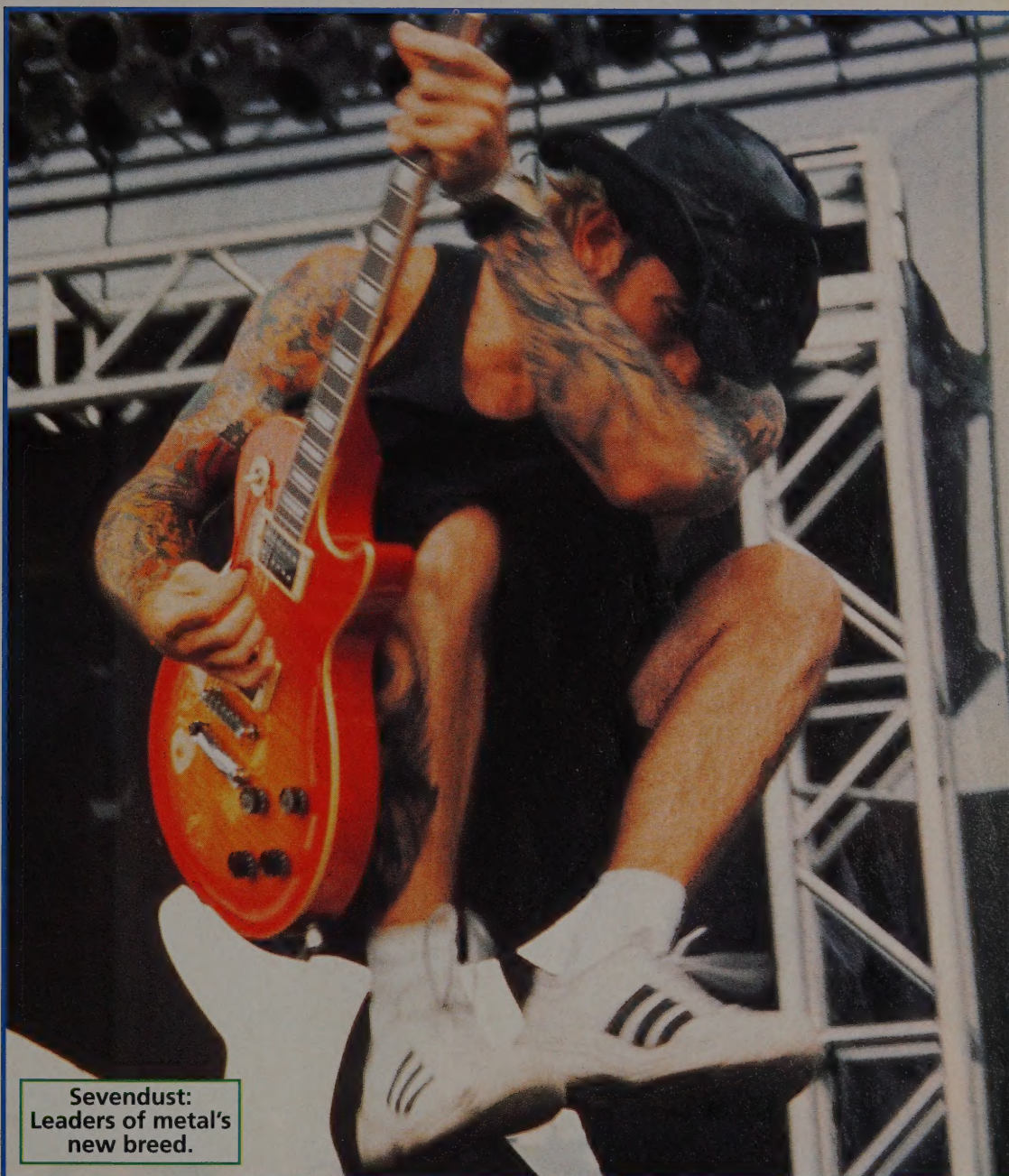
Let me get this right... a *Kings of Metal* issue with Aerosmith and Guns N' Roses, but not Slayer? All they get is one lousy photo?? I'd like to get my hands on the numb-nut who planned that issue. His idea of "metal" is probably the Beach Boys. Angry in Atlanta

WHERE HAVE THEY GONE?

I collect every issue of *Hit Parader*. I have 'em going all the way back to 1987 (a Motley Crue cover, by the way.) What I find really interesting is how some bands get covered for month after month, then disappear... never to be seen again. And I'm not just talking about bands that break up. I'm talking about bands that at one time were very important, and that still rock on today. When was the last time you did an article on Anthrax, W.A.S.P. or Dio, for instance? They used to be staples, and now I never even see their names mentioned.

Jim
Orange, NJ

What happened to Disturbed, Sevendust, P.O.D. and Puddle of Mudd? I used to be able to count on you guys to give me a monthly—or at least *almost* monthly—update on what was going on with them in terms of recording/touring/resting. Now I hardly even see their names mentioned on your hallowed pages. You seem too



Sevendust:
Leaders of metal's
new breed.

caught up in bands like Lamb of God and Shadows Fall. Hey, please, get back to the bands that *really* matter.

Jed
Durham, NC

I've notice that your last few articles about Linkin Park have been increasingly negative. I know not everyone (especially metal fans) was happy with their recent pairing with rapper Jay-Z. But what those fans don't seem to understand is that Linkin Park has always been about taking chances and unifying seemingly divergent musical styles. Think of it this way: they didn't go "rap" for Jay-Z... rather, they

heavied up the rap dude!

Parker
Peoria, IL

I'm sick and tired of reading letters of supposed metal fans who say you are presenting too many Slipknot covers. They don't know what they're talking about! Slipknot rule! They prove that every time they go on stage. They're the only band that can comfortably play with everyone from Sabbath and Priest right to Lamb of God and Shadows Fall. That's why they rule!

Mike
Staten Island, NY

CAUGHT IN THE ACT

BY DAMON LANCASTER

LAMB OF GOD

The members of Lamb of God—vocalist Randy Blythe, guitarist Mark Morton, guitarist Willie Adler, drummer Chris Adler and bassist John Campbell—had crowded together in their compact-but-adequate backstage dressing room. As Morton noodled sweet nothings on his axe, and the group's other members began engaging in their various pre-show rituals, Blythe walked to a nearby shower room to begin doing his warm-up vocal calisthenics. It was still early in the *Subliminal Verses* road run that these Virginia heavy metal aces were sharing with Shadows Fall and tour headliners, Slipknot. And despite the media frenzy that the tour was generating, the LOG members seemed surprisingly relaxed when discussing the opportunities this high-profile road jaunt presented for greatly expanding their already sizable fan base.

"This is a great tour for us," Chris Adler said. "We've been on the road with all of these bands before, and they're all great people. We enjoy hangin' out with them and having fun—and we all love the chance to share a stage and just blow people away with the music we play. It's not a competitive atmosphere at all. It's just three very confident bands that like one another—but that also want to blow away the fans at every show. It's a really cool tour."

Having known the members of Shadows Fall for many years, and having toured with the Knot during last summer's *Ozzfest*, it wasn't surprising to sense the degree of camaraderie that raced through the blood of all three tour bands. Indeed, Slipknot carefully chose their touring partners just as much for their ability to function together along the tour trail as for their high degree of metallic acumen. But when all was said and done, it was still the music played on stage each night that made this historic road package work, and that was a fact certainly not lost on the members of Lamb of God.

"That's what this tour is all about," Morton said. "It's not about each band acting wilder than the others—we'll leave that to Slipknot. It's about every band playing the best music they can. Every band on the bill is very musical. Sometimes that's overlooked with a band like Slipknot, but all you've got to do is close your eyes and listen to how intricate their music is, and you know that those guys can really play! That's really true for Shadows Fall, as well. They're an amazing band and we're really glad that they're finally beginning to get the kind of attention they deserve. But I guess you could say the same thing about us."

As they hit the stage, sandwiched between Shadows Fall's brilliant opening set and Slipknot's incendiary show closer, Lamb of God knew they had much to live up to: But

"We've been on the road with all of these bands before, and they're all great people."



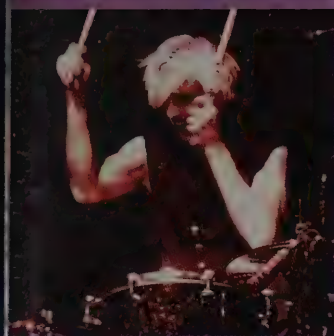
PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO



Lamb of God: "This tour is about every band playing the best music they can."

having ten years of road experience under their collective belt, there is little in the rock and roll world that can intimidate this ever-confident crew. Drawing heavily from their recent release, *Ashes of the Wake*, but also featuring selections from their earlier discs, *New American Gospel* and *As the Palaces Burn*, the band put on a sizzling 45 minute set that showcased both the inherent dexterity of their music and the overwhelming power of their presentations. Whether it was on their latest disc's instrumental title track, or on songs like *What I've Become* and *The Faded Line*, this unit delivered the goods, shifting musical gears without ever taking their foot off of the metal pedal.

"It's very important for us to pace our set," Campbell said. "We want to give you a little bit of a break every now and then, so when we start to bludgeon you, you really feel it. The nature of our music allows us to do that. We play music that straddles the line between progressive rock and what you may want to call traditional metal. I think we make prog-rock more listenable without cheapening the progressiveness of it. The complexity of our music appeals to people who like technical playing, but the arrangements are not so extreme that they fly over the average listener's head. It's a good balance."



GINGER FISH
MARILYN MANSON



DAVE LOMBARDO
SLAYER



BEVAN DAVIES
DANZIG



PETE SANDOVAL
MORBID ANGEL

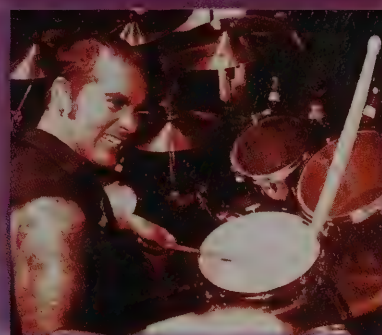
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EVERY TIME I DIE



CHRIS ADLER
LAMB OF GOD



SKINNY
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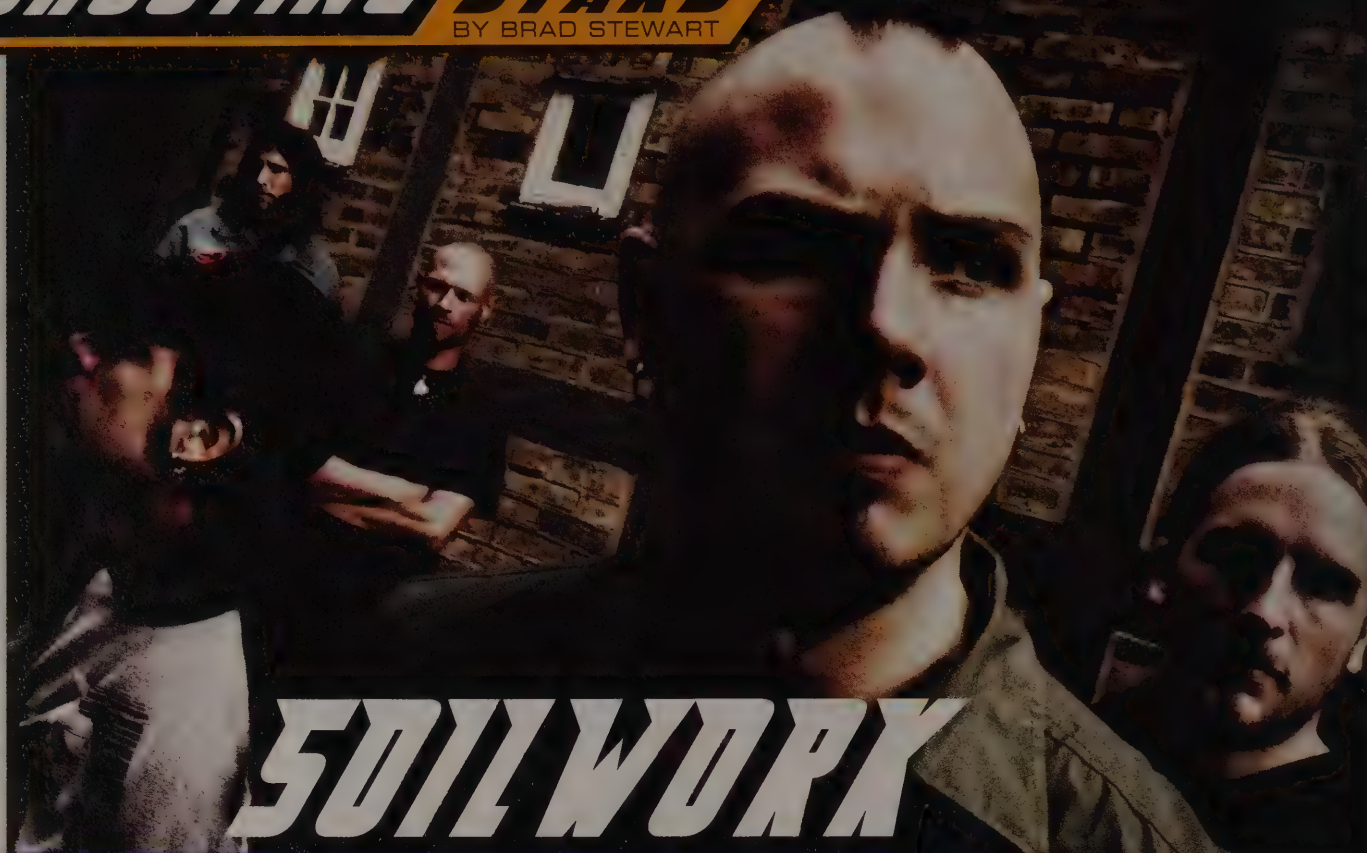
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BAND ON THE RISE!
SHOOTING STARS
BY BRAD STEWART



BY MARTIN BECK

"We won't allow ourselves to slow down or lose focus."

If you ask most followers of extreme melodic metal (all six of them!!) they'll most likely tell you that the most common musical denominator that characterizes the music of Soilwork is its inherent brutality. But just focusing on the unrelenting power that this Swedish unit brings forth would hardly do them justice. For housed within the songs featured on this unusual band's latest release, **Stabbing the Drama**, is some of the most revelatory and revolutionary metal music to be experienced anywhere. By melding the harsh aggressiveness of their approach with an almost shocking degree of melody, harmony and passion, vocalist Bjorn "Speed" Strid, guitarist Peter Winchers, guitarist Ola Frenning, keyboardist Sven Karlsson, bassist Ola Flink and drummer Dirk Verbeuren have emerged with a unique musical hybrid that may end up carrying them far in these highly unpredictable hard rock times.

"There are certain elements that definitely help to define our sound," Strid said. "Those would be, in no particular order; intensity, melodies, atmosphere and heaviness. But it's more than just a good mixing of those elements. It's creating songs that can properly showcase them. With us there can be no fillers on an album, only killers! Every song on every album must represent Soilwork at its best, and that's something we believe **Stabbing the Drama** does better than any of our previous releases."

Those previous releases include such "underground" sensations as 1999's **The Chainheart Machine**, 2002's **Natural Born Chaos** and 2003's critically acclaimed **Figure Number Five**. Indeed this is one band that has kept extremely busy since their formation back in 1997. Over the ensuing eight year period, this unit has cranked out no less than eight releases, certainly ranking them among the most prodigiously productive of contemporary metal acts. But rather than seeing their material weaken through near-constant exposure, this band has managed to strengthen both their sound and their resolve over the ensuing years. Despite a number of significant lineup changes

"There are certain elements that define our sound: intensity, melodies, atmosphere and heaviness."

(these guys started out life as a quartet before expanding to their present size), Soilwork's focus has never wavered. Indeed, it is the intensity through which they attack each and every stage of their musical production that has served to separate them from the Scandinavian metal horde that has included like-minded units ranging from Meshuggah to Hypocrisy.

"Many people both in Europe and America seem surprised at how productive we can be," Strid said. "Yes, we have made a lot of music over the last few years, but that's because we draw inspiration from virtually everything around us. For Soilwork the concept of 'lacking inspiration' is incomprehensible. Whether we draw that

inspiration from each other, from things we experience while we're on the road, or from the fans we encounter every day, it is certainly there for us. We won't allow ourselves to slow down or lose focus."

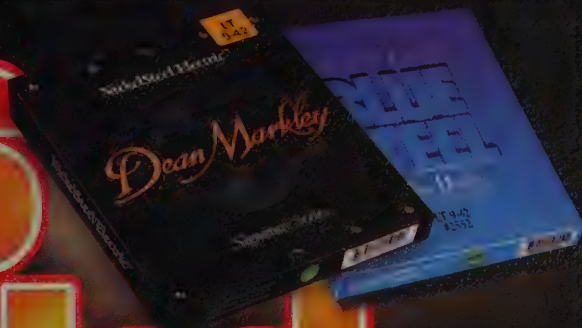
That dedication to their craft has been richly rewarded. Prestigious publications on both sides of the Atlantic have billed Soilwork as one of metal's most important underground forces. And with the immediate praise that's been heaped upon **Stabbing the Drama**, it seems as if all the kudos that have come this unit's way will only serve as an appetizer for the onslaught that is soon to come. Indeed, as more and more fans

get to her songs like *Weapon of Vanity*, *The Crestfallen* and *Fate In Motion*, it seems as if the entire metal universe will quickly open up to Soilwork's overpowering charms. Now the band wants to take the foothold they've already carved on U.S. shores and turn that into a ladder to the top of the contemporary metal pile.

"We've had the opportunity to play a number of shows in America," Strid said. "But our upcoming tour will be our best, by far. We will be headlining a bill that also features Dark Tranquillity and Hypocrisy, and we believe it will help us establish our true place in the metal world."

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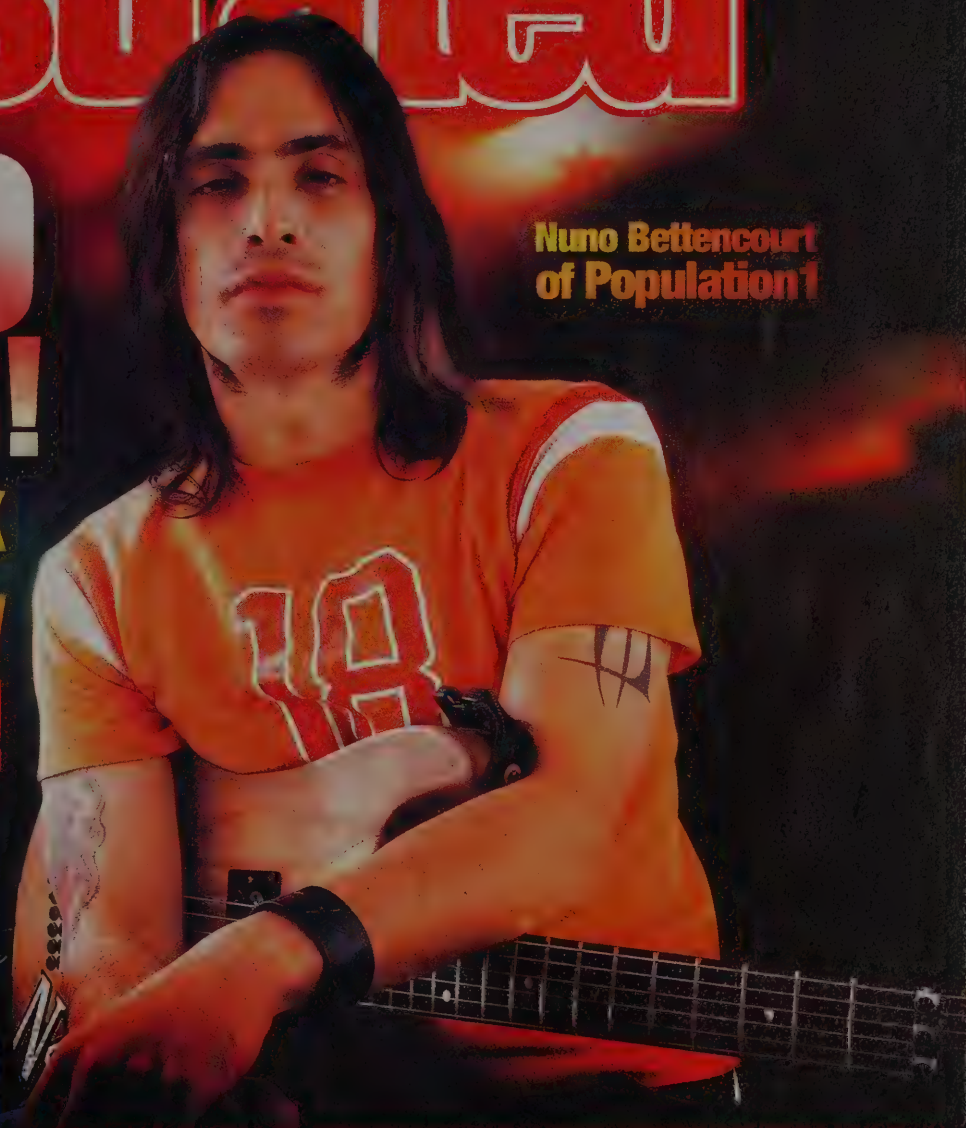
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IN THIS ISSUE:
ESSENTIALS of
SONGWRITING &
RHYTHM GUITAR

Nuno Bettencourt
of Population 1



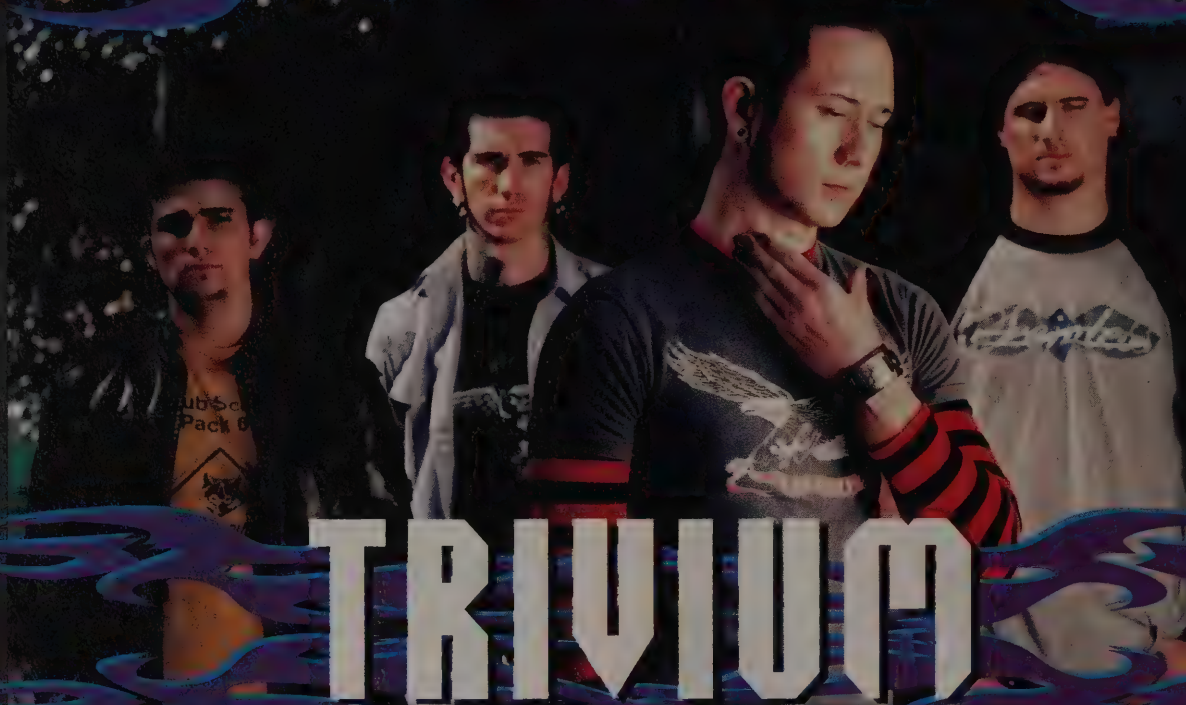
Nuno Bettencourt, formerly of Extreme, continues to blaze trails as both guitarist and songwriter with his new band, Population 1. Inspired by many musical styles and influences; Van Halen, The Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Prince, Queen, The Pat Travers Band, just to name a few. There's one thing that guitar players everywhere agree on, Nuno knows guitar...and guitar strings!

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BY PATRICK ZANETTI



TRIVIUM

When Trivium's vocalist/guitarist Matt Heafy, guitarist Corey Beaulieu, drummer Travis Smith and bassist Paolo Gregoletto were growing up in and around Orlando, FL in the early '90s, it didn't take them long to discover the wonders of rock and roll. Indeed, from the time this crew was old enough to walk and talk, the pulsating rhythms, instrumental precision and lyrical power of the rock form seemed to consume them. The members of this trend-bending heavy metal unit now range in age from 18 to 21, and during their brief time on Planet Earth it seems as if just about every hard rock style from trash to progressive has been heard and absorbed by the ambitious quartet. But it's not as if Trivium are merely regurgitating various bits of rock history on their latest disc,

Ascendancy. Rather, from the technical precision that marks tracks such as *Like Light to the Flies*, to the full-brunt brutality that distinguishes *Pull Harder on the Strings of Your Martyr*, this is a disc and a band with an approach that is distinctly their own.

"The title of the album refers to the overcoming of life's obstacles—to rise above everything and overcome the corruption of the world around us," said the 18 year-old Heafy. "I've tried to really open up and show what I'm thinking inside, revealing the problems that are particularly troubling. **Ascendancy** deals with many realizations based around that theme."

It's obvious from his words—as well as his surprisingly cerebral music and lyrics—that young Mr. Heafy isn't your "normal" teen-aged rocker. In fact, in many ways he represents metal's New Breed... thoughtful, introspective and powerful musicians who aren't afraid of exposing their inner-most turmoil through song. It's been that way for Heafy since he was 14 and formed the first version of Trivium (which translates from Latin to mean

"the intersection between the three schools of learning: grammar, rhetoric and grammar") with school bud Smith during the summer of 2000. After suffering through the traditional lineup changes, the band's roster finally began to solidify in 2002, and a year later the group recorded their first album, *Ember to Inferno*, for a label based in Germany. The continental success of that disc led to Trivium being asked to join that year's *Road Rage* tour with the likes of Machine Head and Chimaria—which up until the release of **Ascendancy** stood as this unit's career highlight.

"That tour was an amazing experience for us," Heafy said. "It was like every night was a party—and I don't mean that strictly in the sense of getting drunk. It was more about being able to hang out with great musicians and learn from them. And the chance to feed off of the energy the crowd brought every night was incredible. It really pumped us up when it came time to begin work on this album."

Recorded in Europe during the summer of 2004, **Ascendancy** is clearly Trivium's call-to-arms. Drawing on the thrash energy of such metal pioneers as Slayer and Metallica and then adding their own musical and lyrical perspectives to the heavy metallic brew, this is the disc that is destined to make this fearsome foursome big-time players on the 21st Century metal stage.

"The first album was more raw and aggressive," Heafy said. "This one shows some of our more progressive influences. There are twin-guitar harmonies going on, and the whole level of song writing is far more sophisticated than it was before. We're still young—we're continuing to grow. And rather than fighting those changes, we're doing our best to embrace them. We set out to make an album that showcased the multi-dimensional aspects of this band, and we have."

"The title of the album refers to the overcoming of life's obstacles."

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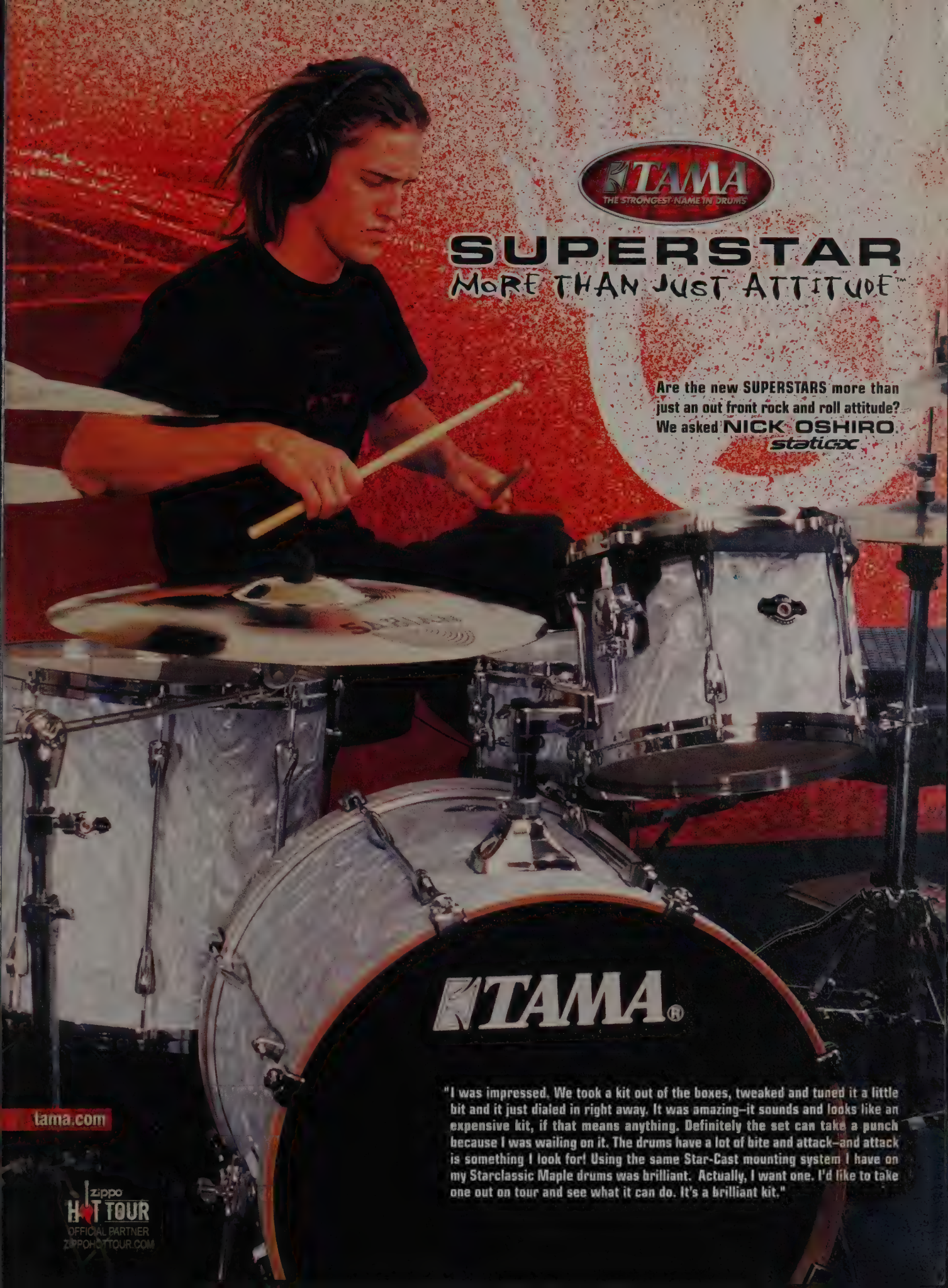




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"This record is stripped-down, live-in-the-studio rock and roll."

BY TOM LINDER

Whether you've been a rock and roll fan for 20 years or 20 minutes, you've probably figured out a big "secret"—that the form's success often depends just as much on attitude as it does on talent. Sure, being able to play lightning-fast guitar leads and hitting the perfect vocal high note are vital when it comes to cranking out the hits. But just as important is the ability to exude the kind of go-for-the-throat charisma that has made legions of groups household names throughout hard rock's 40 year history. And make no mistake about it, as shown throughout their latest power packed collection, **Rules**, the members of Supagroup have just the right rock and roll attitude, and they have it in abundance. With a style that's equal part AC/DC power, Van Halen energy and Aerosmith accessibility, there's no question that vocalist/guitarist Chris Lee, lead guitarist Benji Lee, bassist Leif Robinson Swift and drummer Michael Brueggen have the true "spirit" of rock and roll coursing through their veins.

"We'll leave all the serious stuff to other bands," Chris said. "We'd rather sing about the 'important' stuff in life... like getting laid and getting drunk. That's *real* rock and roll! We make records because they serve as the soundtracks to our lives. This album is the songs we wrote and recorded... between rounds of shots."

You've gotta applaud Supagroup's fun-at-all-costs approach to their hard rockin' craft. At a time when it seems like just about every band on the block is either bemoaning their fate or questioning the direction of the universe, this fully-loaded quartet have set their sights on far more down-to-earth targets—scoring with chicks and downing as much liquor as humanly possible. As heard throughout such **Rules** tunes as *Ready To Go*, *Hog Wild* and *One For The Money* this is one unit set on delivering the timeless sounds of great, guitar-driven rock... the critics be damned! Sure, there have been those who've stated their belief that the approach so effectively utilized by Supagroup is little more than a dated remnant of a long-gone rock era. But there seem to be many more followers who see in this group's anything-goes approach the hope that some of hard rock's forgotten luster will soon be updated and applied to a new generation of metal masters.

"This record is stripped-down, live-in-the-studio rock and roll," Chris said. "It has that real Arena Rock feel, which you can only get when you don't depend on overdubs and play like you're a real band. The main theme of the record is the rejection of real life. We want everyone who hears it to reject the responsibilities and, most especially, the rules that so

many people want to stick you with. The trick is to write your own rules, and if we can convince some people of that, then we've accomplished what we set out to do.

The roots of Supagroup stretch to the wilds of Anchorage, Alaska where Chris and his brother Benji grew up. It was in that out-of-the-way locale that the pair first developed their love for raw, real rock and roll and put together the first version of their band. But it wasn't until the brothers moved to New Orleans in 1998 that their musical dreams began to become a reality. Within weeks they had hooked up with Swift and Brueggen and began hitting the vibrant Southeastern club circuit. While the major labels turned their backs on what they viewed as a "retro" band, Supagroup trudged on, eventually releasing their self-titled debut disc in 2002 to rave reviews. But now, with **Rules** opening more doors than ever, and some major tours looming on the horizon, it doesn't seem as if the major labels—or anyone else, for that matter—can avoid Supagroup for very much longer.

"Yeah, it would be cool to be signed to a major label," Chris said. "But it doesn't bother us that we're not. The sales always come from the fans who hear what we do and love it. The way we look at things, it really doesn't matter who puts the record out, as long as the people get to hear it."



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rating system: *****awesome *****slammin' *****smokin' *****lame *****trash

This month we begin something new. We've asked two of our most musically savvy staffers (who, by the way, have radically different rock and roll tastes) to listen to the this month's top album releases and offer their insightful—though often misguided—opinions. We call this exercise in musical futility *Collision Course*.

NINE INCH NAILS, WITH TEETH

Waiting for the arrival of a new Nine Inch Nails disc can test the patience of even the most devoted Trent Reznor fanatic. Entire generations of rock devotees come and go in the periods that traditionally separate NIN releases. But the good news is that invariably when a new Reznor-crafted album does arrive, it's something well worth waiting for. While NIN's latest, **With Teeth**, may not possess the initial "bite" of such past classics as **The Downward Spiral**, it stands as the most introspective and revealing of all of Reznor's much-lauded work. Here, NIN's characteristic metal-dance beats have been tempered into a sludge-like drawl, allowing The Master plenty of room to exert his ever-inventive artistic game plan. Though they don't come easy, the results are well worth the extra effort required.

RATING: *****

I've never understood Nine Inch Nails, and by now I'm beginning to believe that I never will. What exactly is Reznor trying to say in his dirge-like rock opuses? I'm sure there are hundreds of thousands of fans around the world all-too-eager to delve into every available intricacy presented in the songs featured on **With Teeth**. But I prefer my music a little more visceral and a little less psychotically intellectual.

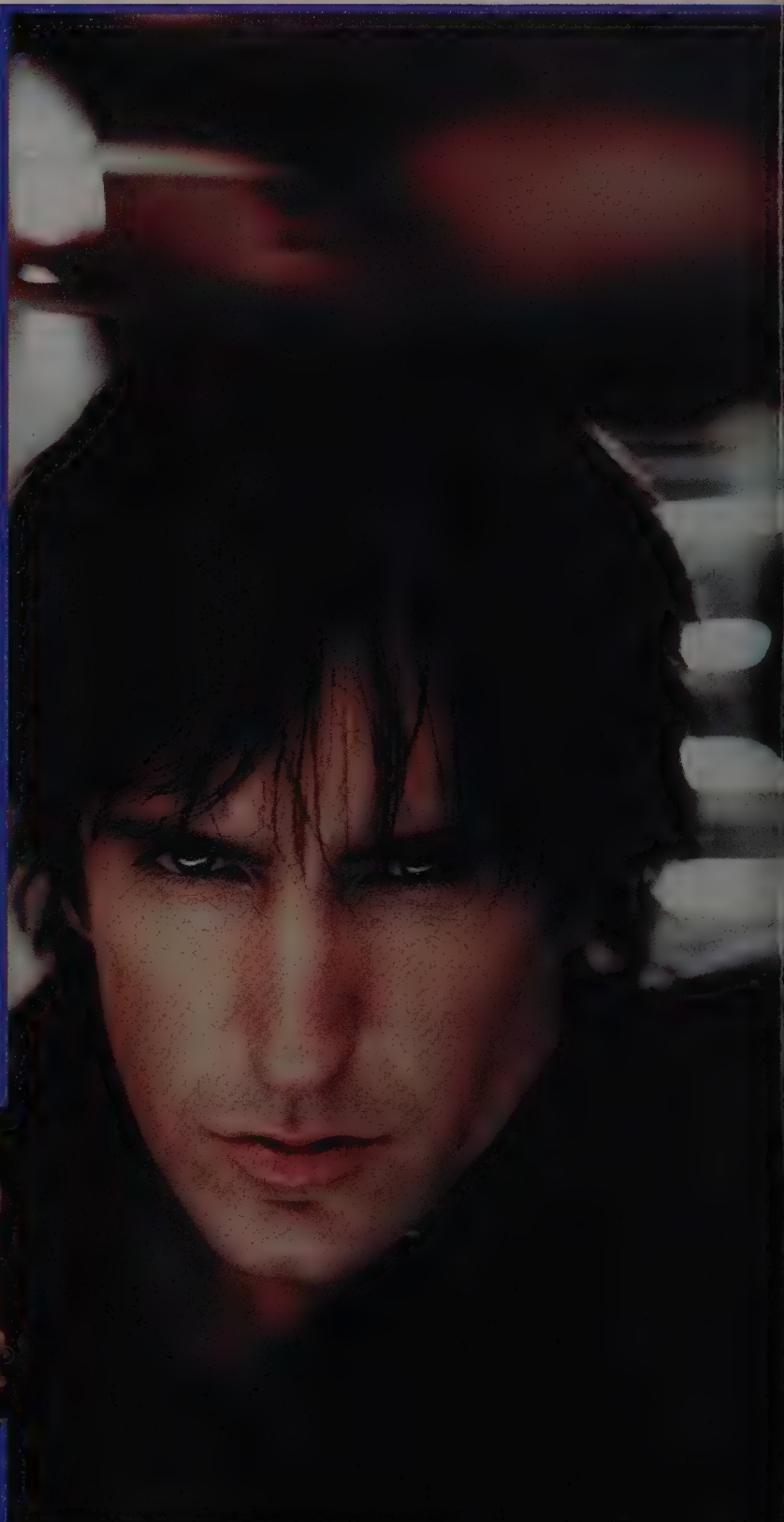
RATING: ***

SYSTEM OF A DOWN, HYPNOTIZE

On their latest release **Hypnotize** (along with its "companion" — soon-to-be-released disc— **Mesmerize**) System of a Down seem intent on proving that they're more than metal's leading lights of political outrage and commentary. Indeed, with one song featuring an ode to the size of the singer's "member", and another comparing berries and ghosts (ahhhh... the hidden meanings!) it would seem as if this already-legendary quartet is determined to show the inherent diversity of their approach. For the most part it works; that is if you get off on the band's typically quirky and ever-unpredictable rhythmic and lyrical patterns.

RATING: ****

18 HIT PARADER



There can now be no remaining doubt that System of a Down rank as the true poet laureates of their rock generation. Willing to tackle any lyrical subject head-on, and unafraid to test their own musical limits, on *Hypnotize* this So Cal unit solidifies their position as the single most important hard rock act of this era. Picking up the "relevance first" mantle cast aside a few years back by Rage Against the Machine, this time around SOAD offer

The Indies

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

RECOVER THIS MAY BE THE YEAR I DISAPPEAR (Universal)

Old rock and roll souls reside in the members of Recover. The quartet's brand of rock is certainly modern, with a dash of emotional excitement in every track. The 21 and under set will undoubtedly flock to Recover. There's no denying the youthful essence and effervescence of *This May Be The Year I Disappear*. But this isn't your standard variety "emo" or "emotional rock." Underneath Recover's earnestness lies a rugged, not-quite-classic rock vibe that permeates every note, every riff, and every tune on *This May Be The Year I Disappear*. The album, namely on *Night Of The Creeps*, *Disappear* and *For Free*, traffics in dirty, noisy rock. If you're looking for something a little edgier, than Recover and *This May Be The Year I Disappear* are certainly sharp enough



FOR FANS OF: Thrice, Thursday
RATING: *

LOSA THE PERFECT MOMENT (Metal Blade)

On *The Perfect Moment*, Losa channel Tool into their potent, abrasive metal. Most of *The Perfect Moment* is edgy, anxious metal, but often-times, this Dallas quintet slips into atmospheric, artistic mode. They slowly apply the brakes, and jam out in an uncharacteristic way, and as a result, the slower passages sound lifted from the template of a Tool album. That's not to say Losa are ripping off everyone's favorite art-metal troupe, but Losa definitely studies at the Tool School. Whether it's subconscious or not is an entirely different issue, Losa and *The Perfect Moment* are as fresh as they are dissonant, and these guys could have a career not unlike Neurosis, where they go from noisy to noir, although Losa's music isn't quite as dense as Neurosis's brand of



rock. Vocalist Michael Hall spits his words out like venom, and he's backed by two able guitarists. Metal Blade mined the underground and came up with this imperfect gem. Props to the label for discovering a talent that's still developing and has time to do just that.

RATING: ***
FOR FANS OF: Coalesce, Isis, Tool

CROWBAR LIFEBLOOD FOR THE DOWNTRODDEN (Candlelight USA)

Listening to a Crowbar record is like navigating through a pit of quicksand, peanut butter, syrup, and mud, all the while wearing a pair of cement shoes. It's laborious, work-intensive, and extremely difficult to do. The NOLA (that's New Orleans, LA) band works in riffs sludgier and thicker than the swamps of the bayou that surround their native city. Crowbar definitely take inspiration from Black Sabbath, only Crowbar add a few more weights to the barbell. *Lifesblood For The Downtrodden*, which features guest appearances on several songs from producer/Pantera bassist Rex Brown, is Crowbar's first new effort in a quite a few years, and it's actually better produced and more musically satisfying than its predecessor. One of the best things about this record is that most of the songs on *Lifesblood*...have long, guitar outro end-

ings, so it feels like the riffs are waves that you ride out to sea. It's almost a peaceful quality, despite the fact that the album pummels with punishingly slow force for the majority of the songs. *Lifesblood* is an exercise in contradiction, and keeps things somewhat unpredictable.

RATING: **
FOR FANS OF: Down, Black Sabbath

YRKOON OCCULT MEDICINE (Osmose)

Yrkoon's *Occult Medicine* is what we rock journalists at *Hit Parader* like to call 'blackened death metal.' It's essentially super fast death metal (guttural growls not unlike that of Cookie Monster, fast guitars and lots and lots of solos, double bass drumming) laced with black metal conventions like shrieky vocals and keyboards. While *Occult Medicine* doesn't feature any keyboards, and the vocals are

The Indies

deep and throaty for the most part, this can still be classified as 'blackened death metal' because of the speed and precision of the playing. To be this fast and this good requires a surgeon-like hand and it's safe to say that the members of Yrkoon are in their residencies.

RATING: **

FOR FANS OF: Darkthrone, Dimmu Borgir, Cradle Of Filth

COMEBACK KID WAKE THE DEAD (Victory)

Comeback Kid must've downed a case of super-cafeinated Jolt Cola when they wrote and recorded *Wake The Dead*. To say that this album has energy would be like saying that most Americans mildly dislike Iraq. *Wake The Dead* follows in the footsteps of bands like Sick Of It All and AFI, fusing swift, high-energy riffs with robust, group chants and singalongs, and nasally, adenoidal vocals. While *Wake The Dead* has more in common with old school punk rock and hardcore, the album doesn't feel dated. But it will appeal to the youth set that like rebellion rock. And lyrically, Comeback Kid have something to say about everything in general and nothing really specific, but it'll still resonate a chord with the youth of today. The lyrics have a universal, easily relatable quality to them, and the music has a driving, insurgent quality that could ignite some positive uprising. Overall, *Wake The Dead* is good, but not great.

RATING: **

FOR FANS OF: Sick Of It All, Terror, AFI, Stretch Arm Strong

KHZ REALITY ON A FINE SCALE (Propain)

Chicks and rock are two great tastes that taste great together, a rock music reality that KHZ understands and understands well. *Reality On A Fine Scale*, which over-stays its welcome with 15 tracks, which is just too many, is female-fronted, light industrial-tinged rock music that doesn't contain samples or keyboards, but has a crunchy, machine-like, almost Nine Inch Nails feel. Frontwoman Raiana spews the "eff bomb" about 25 times on album

opener, *It's Yours*, so that should clue you in relatively early to the level of angst that coats every note of *Reality On A Fine Scale*. For the alienated, pissed off, rebellious youth, we prescribe a daily dose of KHZ and *Reality On A Fine Scale*. Not too heavy but certainly not soft, *Reality On A Fine Scale* will appeal to the kids looking for a respite from dad, the principal or the school bully.

RATING: **

FOR FANS OF: Nine Inch Nails, Marilyn Manson, Kittie

TRANSISTOR ERASE ALL NAMES AND LICENSES (Level Plane)

Out of key, out of tune, distorted, minimally produced, noisy, static driven, dissonant, discordant and feedback filled. That's Transistor, Transistor's *Erase All Names And Licenses* in a nut shell. An easy listen, it is not. A hipster friendly opus, it is. The record sounds like it was recorded in a tin garage, and definitely goes for the garage rock sound. It also pays homage to dirty, fuzzed out, and stripped down '70s rock on tracks like *Power Chord Academy* and *Curse You All Kids*. It'll require plenty of patience to get through this disc without stopping for a breather, but we know you can do it. If you like harsh rock with hemorrhaging guitars, then you'll go crazy over Transistor, Transistor and *Erase All Names And Licenses*.

RATING: ***

FOR FANS OF: Suicide Note, Sonic Youth, Theory Of Ruin

THE LOVED ONES THE LOVED ONES (Jade Tree)

The Loved Ones' self-titled EP is high energy, deep impact pop punk that sounds ripe and ready for an appearance at the Vans Warped Tour. This type of music is certainly very age-specific, usually catering to the 16-and-under set, but The Loved Ones jack it up a notch and will have the 25 year old codgers jumping up and down like they were on pogo sticks. The Loved Ones rocks unapologetically, and has a bubbly charm that will help prevent it from falling through the cracks, since this genre is at capacity. Look forward to the full length, and here's to hoping its as punchy as this five song nugget.

RATING: **

FOR FANS OF: Face To Face, H2O, Alkaline

their pointedly-barbed opinions and messages— while never hitting you over the head with their beliefs.

RATING: ****

WEDNESDAY 13, TRANSYLVANIA 90210

When he first became widely known to the metal masses thanks to his work on the premier release by the Murderdolls, vocalist Wednesday

13 came across as a bastardized mix of Manson and Zombie, with a little Alice Cooper thrown in for good measure. And now with the appearance of his first solo effort, *Transylvania 90210*, those comparisons will only be made stronger— albeit that Wednesday seems to have a little better sense of the absurd than his influences. Mixing horror movie motifs with '60s TV sensibilities (think *Dawn of the Dead* meet *The Munsters*) the resulting musical mix is usually fun— if a bit convoluted at times. With each songs supposedly representing an "episode" in a fictional Wednesday TV series, there is a unifying thread throughout the disc, which in all honesty, neither adds to— or detracts— from the proceedings, which do rock solidly from start to finish.

RATING: ****

Oh wow... just what we need another tongue-in-cheek Shock Rocker making a solo album while his regular band is on hiatus. Look, *Transylvania 90210* is neither a great album nor a bad one. It simply exists as a record label "thank you" to Wednesday 13 for his participation in the Murderdolls successful debut. (Which, if you *must* know was successful more for being a side-project of Slipknot's Joey Jordison than for anything spectacular that Mr. 13 contributed to the musical mayhem.) Still, you could do *much* worse than give this disc a spin or two.

RATING: ****

JOE PERRY, JOE PERRY

We all know Joe Perry as the legendary lead guitarist for Aerosmith. And most of



WEDNESDAY 13

us who have followed that band over their historic 25-plus year career have been subjected to those mid-concert "breaks" when main man Steven Tyler catches his breath and Perry saunters to center stage to warble a song or two. Most of the time that signals time for a bathroom break for the Aero faithful, and unfortunately that's about the same level of respect that should be given Perry's new self-titled solo disc. Mixing a few hard rockers with a surprising number of love songs, Perry's croaky vocals are no match for his fine-fettle guitar skills. Unless you're a true Aerosmith die-hard, we advise that you save your money and wait for the next Aero collection to roll your way.

RATING: ***

Joe Perry is a great guitarist and an average (I'm being kind) singer. He writes good songs and knows how to deliver them in a palatable manner. If the above description turns you on, then go out and pick up a copy of **Joe Perry**.

RATING: ****

SUPAGROUP, RULES

This is neither the time nor the place to rag

on an ambitious young band that seems to be determined to rekindle the halcyon days of hard rock. But the undeniable fact of the matter is that on their sophomore release, **Rules**, New Orleans' own Supagroup seem waaaaay too content to merely regurgitate riffs and concepts as old as hard rock itself. Now none of us has ever indicated that you necessarily needed to reinvent the wheel in order to succeed in the rock and roll form, but at least a *little* originality would probably come in handy. Of course, if somehow you've never heard even the most pedestrian efforts of bands such as AC/DC, Van Halen and Aerosmith, all of this may come across as some sort of musical revelation. But if that's your story, we ain't buying a word of it.

RATING: ****

Let's get straight to it.... I really liked this album. No frills, no spills, no fuss, no muss, no bother, just straight-ahead, go-for-the-throat rock and roll from start to finish. Sure everyone over the age of 8 will have heard virtually all of this before in one form or another, but when rock and roll is played with as much fervor and ambition as Supagroup deliver it on **Rules**, nothing else really matters.

RATING: ****

SUPAGROUP



Quick Reviews

Past Reviews At A Glance

RAMMSTEIN, REISE, REISE
Stars: ****

LACUNA COIL, COMALIES
Stars: ***

SHADOWS FALL, THE WAR WITHIN
Stars: ****

A PERFECT CIRCLE, eMOTIVE
Stars: *****

CHEVELLE, THIS TYPE OF THINKING (COULD DO US IN)
Stars: ****

ALTER BRIDGE, ALTER BRIDGE
Stars: ****

SALIVA, SURVIVAL OF THE SICKEST
Stars: ****

SCORPIONS, UNBREAKABLE
Stars: ***

MARILYN MANSON, LEST WE FORGET
Stars: ****

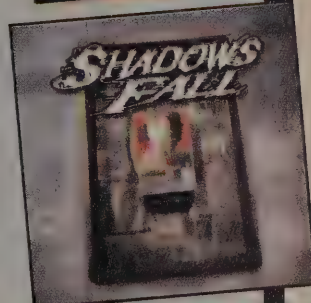
PAPA ROACH, GETTING AWAY WITH MURDER
Stars: ****

SEVENDUST, SOUTHSIDE DOUBLE-WIDE ACOUSTIC LIVE
Stars: ****

KITTIE, UNTIL THE END
Stars: ****

ZAKK WYLDE & BLACK LABEL SOCIETY, HANGOVER MUSIC VOL. VI
Stars: ***

BREAKING BENJAMIN, WE ARE NOT ALONE
Stars: ****



HEAVY METAL HAPPENINGS

JUDAS PRIEST: What is the true significance behind the title of Judas Priest's new disc, *Angel of Retribution*? Actually, the story isn't quite as exciting as it may appear. "We had this amazing piece of artwork that we wanted to use on the cover," said vocalist Rob Halford. "It was called *Angel of Retribution*. We didn't have a song by that title, nor did we plan on writing one. But we felt that the art, the title, and what this band has gone through over the last few years all worked together perfectly. When you see it a light suddenly goes off in your head. You go, 'Ahhhh... now I understand.'"

SLIPKNOT: While they're currently booked to keep on rockin' around the world right up through the end of 2005, the members of Slipknot already sense that at road's end some major changes are gonna take place. No, there's certainly none of the talk of "breakup" that surrounded the group just a few years ago. But now there's a growing acceptance of the fact that other, outside projects may derail the band's plans for up to two years. "We all know that there will be time off, and that some of the guys will do their other projects," said bassist Paul Gray. "But we also feel very confident that at some point after that we'll all gladly refocus on Slipknot."

MUDVAYNE: So how many times have the members of Mudvayne been asked about their decision to drop the outrageous on-stage makeup in the wake of the release of their new disc, *Lost and Found*? According to drummer Matt McDonough more times than he can count! "It's the first thing people ask us, whether they're fans or in the media," he said. "But we understand that. The makeup was one of the things that everyone first noticed about us; and removing it is a big step—even if it's been a very gradual process for us. So we understand... but we'd prefer the questions be more about the music on the new album."

MOTLEY CRUE: Nikki Sixx has never been someone lacking in confidence. So when Motley Crue's bass-beating mastermind was queried in regard to his reaction to the band selling out so many of the arena stops along their *Red, White & Crue* road venture, his reaction was very much in character. "Am I surprised," Sixx asked. "No. Am I pleased? Yes. We knew it was a bit of a gamble to go on the road like that. We haven't played halls of that size in a while. But I felt if we were gonna do this, we had to do it right. It's just really cool the way the fans have responded."



Ozzy: Master of his domain.

System of a Down: A double dose of metal magic

SYSTEM OF A DOWN: As the members of System of a Down contemplate spending most of the next two years on the road supporting their new albums, *Mesmerize* and *Hypnotize*, they admit that they need to break up the touring cycle into more manageable mental blocks. "If I thought about going on the road for two years as a whole, I'd never even get on the plane," said vocalist Serj Tankian. "That's why we divide it up into much more manageable segment that allow us to focus on only a few weeks at a time."

LINKIN PARK: While their recent "mash-up" collaboration with rapper Jay-Z proved to be a commercial success, the guys in Linkin Park admit that they've felt more heat than they expected from their hard core audience. Those fans seem to sense that this ever-inventive unit has wandered too far away from their hard rock roots and they want to make sure this So Cal unit returns to their musical "senses" before they begin writing material for their next disc. "The fans always let us know exactly how they feel," said vocalist Mike Shinoda. "And that goes for the bad as well as the good. They've never been very shy with us."

DARKNESS: With master producer Roy Thomas Baker working with them on their eagerly anticipated sophomore album, everyone in the hard rock world expects the Darkness to blast off in 2005. "We certainly expect that," said loquacious frontman Justin Hawkins. "If we can't do it with the songs we have now, the production we have now and the kind of support we have now, then there is something wrong."

OZZY: Ozzy Osbourne finds himself at a bit of a career crossroads in 2005, and the legendary rockers couldn't be happier about it. It's been nearly four years since the release of his last solo disc, and it's now almost a full year since he played his last live show with Black Sabbath. So with so many career options staring him the face—and his health the best it's been in a decade—Ozzy seems downright thrilled about what lies ahead. "There's still so much I want to do," he said with a laugh. "And even if I didn't want to do it, Sharon would make sure that I did it anyway!"

VELVET REVOLVER: His current band's debut disc, *Contraband*, has sold well over a million copies, but Slash states that many people would still rather talk to him about his former life in Guns 'N Roses than his current stint in Velvet Revolver. "I guess that's something that's never gonna go away," he said. "And, to be honest, I'm happy about that. G 'N R was a big part of my life. I don't want people to ever forget it. But it's nice to know that Velvet Revolver has begun to emerge out of the shadow that any of us may have previously cast."



BREAKING NEWS

BY LOU O'NEILL, JR.

ON DEADLINE: Although it hasn't reached Gotham yet, Slipknot's *The Subliminal Verses Tour*, is said to be nothing short of "mind-blowing." Corey Taylor and co. really spun the dial skillfully on this one. Slipknot astutely selected Lamb of God and Shadows Fall to hitch up for the three-month campaign. The good folks at Fuse are sponsoring.

Even before a note was played, Lamb of God's Randy Blythe predicted, "Dear Lord, what a mess! Thousands of screaming freaks, beer, God knows what else flying everywhere!

Then, loud metal objects being smashed together, innocent bystanders weeping in stoned confusion. Oh, the general mayhem. Oh, wait a second, dude, that's just the party in the parking lot before the show starts." Crazy world, ain't it!

COMMENT: Shadows Fall are said to be playing exceptionally well.

Lamb of God takes the line-up full circle. More details about *The Subliminal Verses Tour* as they develop. Stay tuned.

SECRET STUFF: What heavy metal rock star from London town looks about 20 pounds lighter these days? Up 'round the clock, it's always snowing in his world. Like 24/7! His closest pals are pleading with him to cease. When the intervention took place he went whack-a-ding-hoy!

NO NAMES PLEEZE: The member of a highly popular American band may soon find himself on the Internet — not that he'll be tapping his toes. Unless the big bucks talk. It's like a Paris Hilton thing, but much worse—for his wholesome career at least. We'd stake it'll never see the light of day, but

ROCK WIRE REPORT: The Motley Crue tour seems to be everywhere. Now out in Illinois, Kansas and Colorado. What Vince Neil, Nikki Sixx and the rest of the Crue have done is gone back to basics. Always remember: once a name, always a threat. The demand for shows has been stunning. "We love the tag, 'Red, White and Crue'." Jonathan Davis married his lady, Devon, late last year in Hawaii. Yet, it's what the Korn star did for Tsunami victims that's worth noting as well. Jonathan did not hog the effort, it was all very low-key and low profile. A rock star who was on the very edge of a smashing comeback succumbed to his old demons and is now being hunted by Interpol. You can't make this stuff up.

The Swedish metal band Meshuggah just finished up the new CD and will appoint it **Catch 33**. It's going to be huge! And... it is going to

be divided up into 13 different parts. Phew! And musically quite a leap as well. We stop and remember the late and great Zeppelin drummer, John Bonham on Memorial Day. Perhaps the greatest at his trade we ever saw. He would have been only 57! And talk crazy: One time "Bonzo" drove his spanking new Rolls Royce into the swimming pool on a dare from John Lennon. Ringo Starr and the late Harry Nilsson round out the four individuals who were renting that palatial Beverly Hills mansion so many years ago. It was 12 months



Slipknot: Nothing Short of Mindblowing.

of madness. Even though John's car was ruined, he only laughed. True story. Priest's K.K. Downing is promising, "As much as we can give. We gotta bring back some of the stuff that was enjoyable to most people even though we played those tunes an awful lot. To be true, some of these songs haven't been heard for 20 years!" The Priest tour is roaring.

OVER 'N' OUT: They did a survey of every single record released since SoundScan took over counting in 1991 and sales were 100% certified as true. Like in people actually taking money out of their pocket and buying something. Metallica's iconic, **Metallica** is nearing 15 million copies and is third in all time sales. Considering the "Pirates" booty...those numbers are stunning! ...A couple of wild twins threw a party in D.C. that would make a world wide page one if revealed. It was not a bush league affair!!!

Ozzy's **Prince of Darkness** blitz is rejuvenating the very best of the metal Godfather. Wanna feel older no matter what your age? Just 20 years ago there were 340,000 cell phones in use. This morning: 175 million yappers just in America. After all these years, Eddie Van Halen and Peavey agreed to go their separate ways. Still in all, it seemed to end up amicably enough. The perspicacious Peavey proclaimed, "I'm very, very proud of the work we accomplished with Edward." A top producer had it out (and won) with a famous Australian band as to who the real studio boss was. We'll watch this closely to see if it actually happens. The bone-jarring madmen have always done it their way. Please say no more.

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OZZY OSBOURNE

PLAIN SPEAKING

His latest round of touring with Black Sabbath is underway. His health—following his near fatal 2003 ATV accident—has returned to a more-than-acceptable state of rock and roll readiness. His recent all-encompassing “hits” collection, *Prince of Darkness*, has proven to be a chart-topping smash. His work on his famed MTV sitcom has finally drawn to a close. It’s time, at long last, for Ozzy Osbourne to resume his solo career. It’s been over four years since the Ozz last graced us with a new studio disc, and while rumors surrounding his on-again, off-again recording practices (including a short stint back in ‘03 with former Metallica bassist Jason Newsted) have filled the rock wires over the last few years, the fact is that Osbourne has little to show for his various album-oriented efforts. Apparently, all that is about to soon change. Having once again cast aside the notion of recording a new album with Black Sabbath, Ozzy will soon be venturing into the studio to begin work on a disc he plans (with any luck) to have out by next summer... just in time for him to headline *Ozzfest 2006*!

“Both Ozzy and Sharon know it’s important for Ozzy to resume his solo career at some time,” an inside source revealed. “He’s been very much in the public eye, but most of that has been because of the TV show or due to touring with Sabbath. It’s time to change the focus of his musical life around a little bit. He wants to make a great album and then possibly headline next year’s *Ozzfest* himself.”

How ironic it is that to many in today’s generation of rock and roll fans, Ozzy stands as the ultimate TV “dad”—the bumbling, fumbling, lovable loon who stars in *The Osbournes*.

“I’M VERY THANKFUL THAT I CAN GET UP EACH DAY AND DO SOMETHING I LOVE.”

To another generation, however, Ozzy remains the ultimate heavy metal icon, a performer who has outraged and engaged the masses—while continually delighting his public—for more than 35 years. Whether it’s been as a solo star, or the once-and-perhaps future vocalist in Sabbath, Ozzy stands as the single most important and influential character in heavy metal history. Having sold over 60 million albums during his historic run at the top of the metal mountain, and performed in front of more than 10 million fans during that time, few rockers can hope to hold a proverbial candle to the accomplishments of the one-and-only Ozz.

“I’m very thankful that I can get up each day and do something I love,” Ozzy said. “I’ve grown to appreciate it all more with every passing day. It’s been incredible—but I think I still have a trick or two hidden up my sleeve.”

Indeed, for a guy now well into his mid-50s, especially one who suffered such a serious accident only a year ago, Ozzy shows no signs of slowing down. In a field dominated by tal-

BY WILLIAM BARKER

ent half his age, the one-and-only Metal Godfather remains one of the most visible, successful and in-demand figures in the entire rock and roll world. Having recently completed his latest *Ozzfest* run, and at the peak of his “mainstream” fame thanks to the amazing crossover success of *The Osbournes*, the legendary vocal-

ist has now set his sights on taking his solo career back to an equal level of acclaim. It’s been a long time since the release of his previous solo studio effort, *Down to Earth*, rocked the metal world to its very core, and Ozzy seems downright determined to keep his amazing streak of professional good luck rolling along as best he can.

“When you mention everything that we’ve done, I’m amazed I made it through,” Ozzy said. “But while I was doing all of that, it didn’t seem so bad. It was a lot of work, especially beginning work on the album so soon after touring with Sabbath. But I don’t really ask questions anymore. Sharon tells me to do something, and I just do it. Then after it’s done, I realize that it was a lot of fun.”

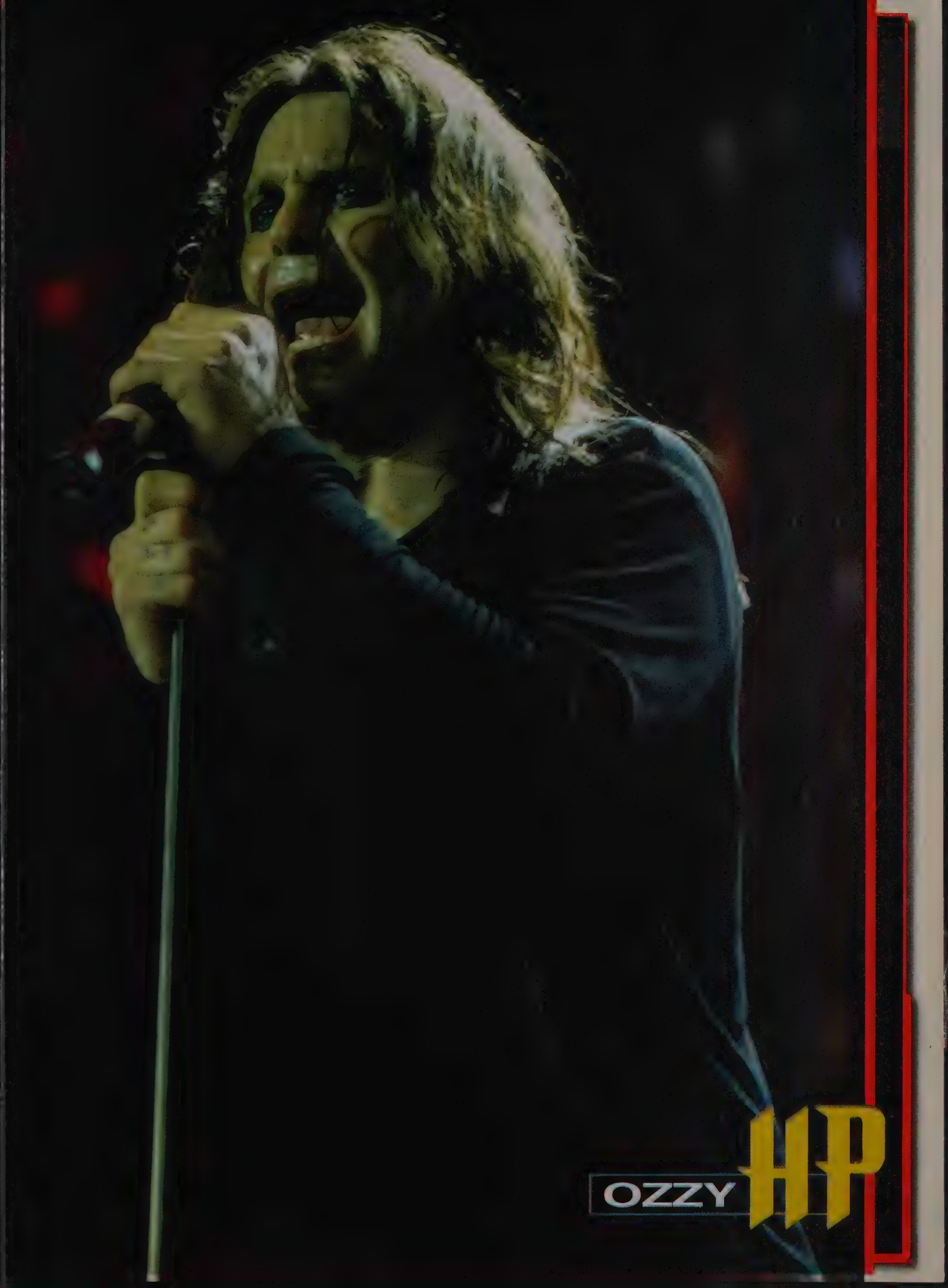
The fact of who really wears the “pants” in the Osbourne household was continually made abundantly clear to anyone who witnessed *The Osbournes* at any point during the show’s historic four-year run. Those views into the world of the Ozz and his family showed the warm, often hilarious and always unpredictable life that the Osbourne clan experienced in and around their lavish estate located high in the Hollywood Hills. While at times Ozzy and his family seemed like any other “normal” family, most of the time their life, attitude and actions were shown to be the antithesis of just about everything that the traditional American family can relate to. When you throw in the various problems suffered by the teen-aged Osbourne kids (including stints in rehab) it’s easy to understand why America was simultaneously amazed, amused and horrified by the adventures and misadventures that continually surrounded the Osbourne clan.

“We are a very normal family,” Ozzy said somewhat defensively. “We have the same problems and the same pleasures as everyone else. But then, not every kid has me for a father. So I guess things are a little different. I think the show did capture what really happens in our house. We didn’t ‘act’ for the cameras. After we got used to them, we just lived our lives and hoped for the best.”

Of course, we must all now begin to wonder if Ozzy isn’t running the risk of overexposing himself to his ever-loyal metal masses. With his

tours running through most American cities more often than Amtrak, and his solo album set to explode at retail within the next six months, have we all perhaps seen a bit too much of Ozzy in recent times? It’s something that the ever-wise rocker has considered, and according to sources, the thought of sequestering himself away from the prying eyes of the public—at least on a short-term basis—did supposedly cross his mind. But as is so often the case with Ozzy, such a notion was tabled until his latest rounds of recording and touring will draw to a close. In the ever-crazy World of Ozz, there’s always time to rest... next year!

“It’s not that I need a rest, but maybe everyone needs a rest from me,” he said. “I have been very busy over the last two years, and maybe now is the time to take a short step back so that everyone can recharge their batteries. But that’s not my decision, it’s Sharon’s, and right now she seems to want me to keep doing what I do best. Come to think of it, so do I!”



OZZY

HP

The members of System of a Down had gathered together in a spacious rehearsal facility located in the industrial outskirts of Los Angeles. The very next day they were scheduled to take off for Australia to begin what promised to be a non-stop two-year road run in support of their two recent discs, *Hypnotize* and *Mesmerize* (out this fall). For Serj Tankian (vocals), Daron Malakian (guitar), Shavo Odadjian (bass), and John Dolmayan (drums), the myriad last-second personal details that needed to be taken care of prior to the band's departure dwarfed behind the necessities brought on by the need to incorporate new material into their live set. For hours on end the unit worked their new songs into stage shape, then debated the merits of adding this song or that. Just as importantly, they discussed the inherent problems involved with removing certain well-known and well-loved tunes from their time-tested set list. Finally, when all was said and done, and their gear was being packed for its trans-oceanic voyage, the band happily agreed to provide us with the needed insight into the world of SOAD in 2005.

of your style to emerge. It's very important that we always continue to evolve.

HP: How has the band's sound evolved from *Toxicity* to these albums?

DM: Well, the world has changed around us, so we have changed. And if we have changed then the music we're making has changed as well. We didn't want to lose our identity on these albums, but we didn't want them to sound like anything we've ever done before. If you try to change too much, you can lose everything you've created. It's so important that we stick to our roots because we're very proud of them. But on the other hand, I don't want to get stuck on those roots. I

SYSTEM OF A DOWN A DOUBLE DOSE

BY TOM OWENS

Hit Parader: An obvious place to start is why you felt the need to release two separate albums.

Daron Malakian: It's really simple; we had so many good songs that we wanted to release, and this was the most logical way to do it. We had hundreds of songs that I had written over the last few years, so getting down to the 24 tracks that made it onto these two albums was very difficult unto itself. Taking it down any further was impossible. Two albums became almost a minimum for us. We probably could have done three or four without sacrificing any quality.

Shavo Odadjian: One of the things we learned with *Steal This Album* a few years ago was that a lot of people incorrectly viewed that material as "leftovers" or things that weren't good enough to make it onto *Toxicity*. That wasn't true at all. So this time, when we again discovered that we were going to have more material than we could possibly place on a single album, the decision was made by all of us to come up with a better solution—and releasing two separate albums at roughly the same time was that solution.

HP: How do you possibly choose between so many songs?

DM: A lot of it has to do with the vibe I'm looking for and the band is looking for. I don't want to push anything down their throats. Thankfully, when I bring songs in to be listened to the rest of the band tends to be highly receptive and very honest in their appraisals. If there's something that they don't particularly like they'll speak up about it... but it doesn't happen very often.

SO: Daron is an amazing songwriter, and since we've all been together so long and we know each other so well as people, he seems to be able to speak for all of us. When we hear his songs, we're all very excited because not only are they so amazing, but they represent what each of us would want that song to sound like.

HP: It seems like there's much more humor in songs like *Cigaro* and *Kill Rock and Roll* than on some past System albums.

DM: I don't think that's really true. We've always had a lot of humor in our songs, but for whatever reason, people have usually tended to gravitate more towards our political material. But if the humor of these songs is being noticed, then I'm very happy. That's such a big element of what we do that I sometimes get very frustrated when it's ignored. A lot of fans expect a certain sound and a certain lyrical perspective from us, and when they're asked to listen and respond to something else it sometimes isn't that easy for them. Thankfully, they've shown a willingness to do that with these albums.

SO: It's all about growing as a band and allowing different elements

"Two albums became almost a minimum for us."

want to always keep adding things and changing things to what we do. I want our past success to serve as a foundation for what we're doing now.

SO: When you look at a person who's 10 years old, and then look at them at 20, you can recognize some key elements, but it's really not the same person. It's true for a band as well. If you go back to our first album and compare it to this one, you hear a more mature and confident band.

HP: Do you ever stop and think about the incredible success the band has enjoyed—and if you do, does that exert any extra

pressure on you?

DM: I do feel the pressure. It's not really brought on by any success we've had, it's brought on more by my desire to make sure this band continually produces the best possible music. What that pressure does is make sure that I work as hard as I possible can. Success is something I try not to think about too much. It doesn't impact me at all. This is not a band of "rock stars" and we never will be.

HP: Is it intimidating to consider that your lives are pretty much planned out for the next two years?

SO: I don't even want to think about it. When you consider it like that it is a little scary. But we have breaks planned in there, so it's not like we're going to strictly be living out of a suitcase for the next two years.

HP: How many new songs do you expect to play on the upcoming tour?

DM: It's easy to put the new songs in... but it's really hard to take the old ones out. Those songs are part of you—and part of this band's history. But just like when you write and record, a live show has to display your evolution as well. That's why as the tour goes along, I know we'll be adding more and more of the new songs because the fans will be familiar with them by then. It would be wrong to go out there when the album is first released—or even before it is released—and hit them with a dozen new songs. It wouldn't be fair. By the last stages of this tour maybe it will be fair to do that.

SO: I think back to when I was a kid and went to hear one of my favorite bands, like Iron Maiden. I wanted to hear my favorite songs. I was happy to hear new things, but I wanted to hear the things I knew. So I guess that still carries over to me today. I understand the need to introduce new songs—and we're very proud of these songs—but we know that the fans want to hear the old things that they like as well. Our trick is to create the perfect balance.



SYSTEM OF A DOWN

HP

MASTODON

LUMBERING FORWARD

One of the most exciting elements of following the hard rock world over an extended period of time is watching the form evolve and change. New bands come and new bands go. Trends that seem ready to burst wide open at one moment seem to disappear in the blink of an eye. Bands that had been struggling for any recognition for years, suddenly find themselves thrust squarely into the spotlight. It is the lifeblood of the heavy metal form. Such has recently been the case with a variety of "underground" metal acts ranging from Lamb of God to Shadows Fall—each of whom brings a decidedly different and decidedly heavy take on their power-packed music musings. But perhaps the most intriguing of

BY TODD LINDER

pains in the ass as soon as they start to feel good about themselves. We do feel good about ourselves, but we're not gonna let it give us any massive egos."

While they're currently the Golden Boys of the metal world, success hasn't come particularly fast or particularly easily for the members of Mastodon. For Dailor and Keliher, their past associations included stints with the bands Today is the Day and Lethargy, both of which enjoyed extensive media and fan support while never breaking through to the Big Time. In 2000, those two left their on-the-brink units behind to team with Saunders and Hinds to form Mastodon. For a year the band rumbled through the Southern rock circuit, leaving a trail of metallic destruction wherever they

that joins many of the songs together. From the blues-powered energy of *Megalodon* to the primal furies of *Blood & Thunder*, this is an album designed to take no prisoners and ask no favors. From start to finish, *Leviathan* is a wild, bumpy riff-filled ride, and the members of Mastodon are more-than-happy to take as many fans as possible along on their quest for the Great White Whale.

"Brann read *Moby Dick* last year and he instantly saw how we needed to try and adapt elements of the book onto an album," Saunders said. "We thought it was very cool how there's sort of a parallel between the quest that we've been on as a band and the quest that Ahab was on with *Moby Dick*. So we felt totally at home tackling this material, and the songs came very naturally. There is a

"IT'S HARD FOR US TO BELIEVE THAT WE'RE GETTING SO MUCH ATTENTION WITH THIS ALBUM."

these recently catapulted-to-the-rock-stratosphere units is Mastodon, a band named after a prehistoric behemoth, and with a sound as big and lumbering as its namesake.

There's little question that Mastodon are the "it" band of the rock and roll moment. Major bands want them to serve as "special guests" on their tours, media outlets vie to get them in their publications, and even the jaded folks at rock radio seem to be warming to this metallic monster's heavy-handed style. It's all fairly heady stuff for guitarist Bill Keliher, drummer Brann Dailor, bassist/vocalist Troy Saunders and guitarist/vocalist Brent Hinds. In all honesty, this Atlanta-based unit probably never imagined that their wall-shaking blend of grind-core metal ingredients would cause such a stir both in the hard rock "underground" and the metal mainstream. But with their latest disc, *Leviathan*, ranking as one of the year's most oft-discussed and oft-praised heavy metal collections, it would clearly appear as if Mastodon are about to rumble their way to the very apex of the metal pecking order.

"It is a little hard for us to believe that we're getting so much attention with this album," Saunders said. "The problem for us right now is to not let any of the nice things people are saying have an impact on us. We've all seen a lot of bands that go from being cool guys to

appeared. A year later, their first release, *Lifesblood*, marked Mastodon's ascension up the underground metal ladder, and in 2002 their follow-up, *Remission*, proved that this unit was going to be long-term players on the hard rock scene. As they now look back on their earlier discs—especially in comparison to the multi-dimensional *Leviathan*—the band realize they've come a long way in a relatively short time.

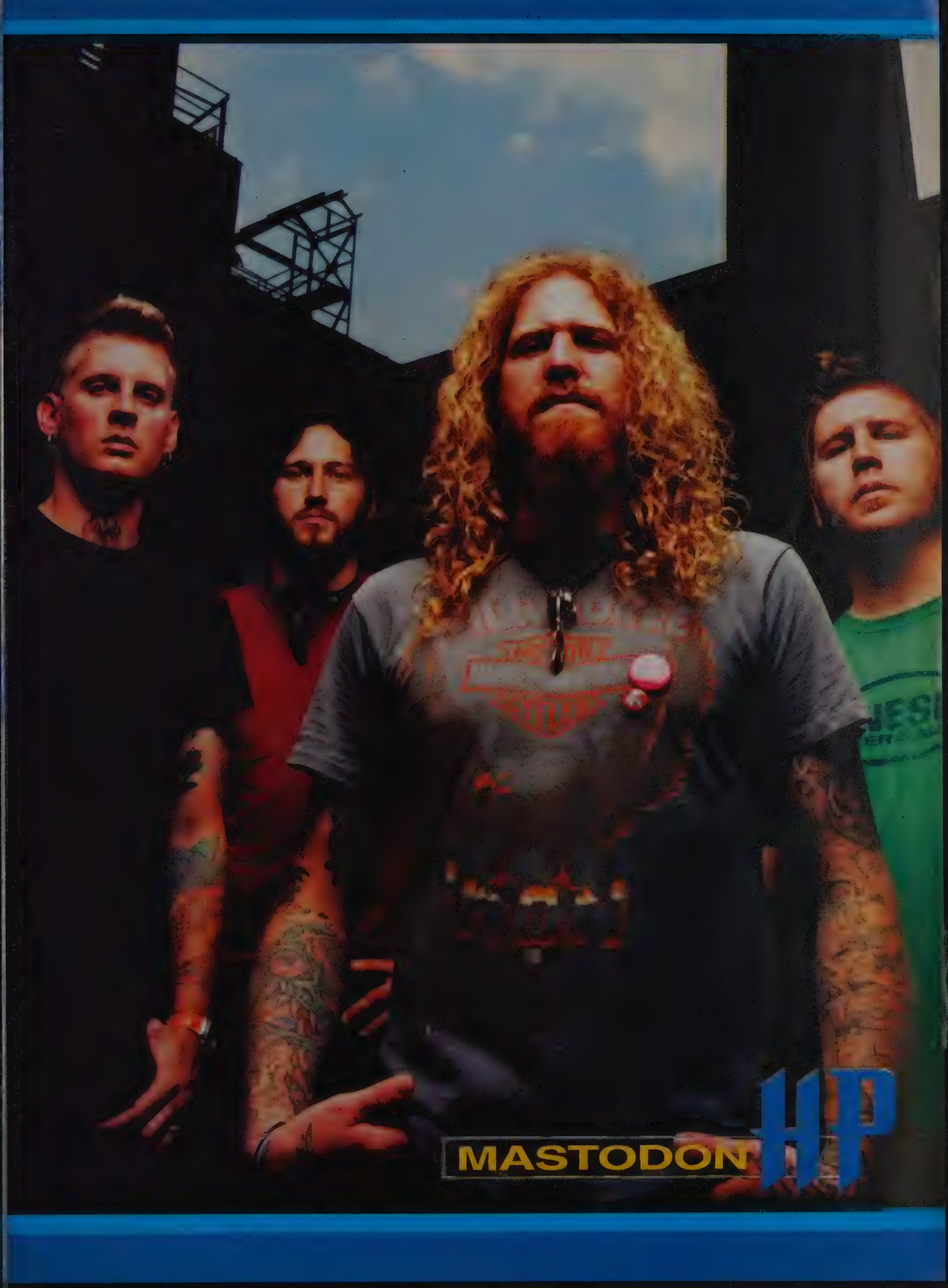
"I would say one of the biggest changes has been with the vocals," Saunders said. "In the past, there was a lot of screaming, while on *Leviathan* there's a lot more actual singing. We tried to adapt an attitude where the vocals were like another instrument, that they were there to blend in with the music in some capacity. We needed to make the vocals work like that because the lyrics to these songs are so strong. We wanted them to be fully understood and appreciated. There are still some songs on this album where you just need to roar at the top of your lungs. But we have definitely grown and gotten away from that on every song."

The complexity and diversity of the material featured throughout *Leviathan* lends plenty of credence to Saunders' claims of musical growth. While the band shies away from labeling their latest effort a "concept album", there's no denying the strong sense of unity

theme running through the entire album, though it isn't a concept album. This is our story as much as anything else. It isn't our interpretation of *Moby Dick*."

With commercial and critical response for *Leviathan* creating the much-desired "buzz" around Mastodon, it hasn't taken the "big boys" of the metal world long to notice these power-packed upstarts. While the group has done the traditional tours with fellow on-the-rise acts like Clutch and Fear Factory, they've also been given the nod by Metal Gods like Slayer, with whom Mastodon recently shared a stage for an entire road trek. Touring with Slayer not only gave these Georgia-based rockers a certain, undeniable "nod" of approval from the metal overlords, it also helped the Mastodon men introduce themselves to an ever-wider audience.

"Touring with Slayer was incredible," Saunders said. "Maybe the only greater thrill for me would be the chance to go on the road with Metallica. I don't know if that will ever happen, but certainly the Slayer tour is one of the highlights of our lives. When you think about the number of bands that wanted that tour, and that they chose us, that is just mind-blowing! It was the chance to let a lot of people, who may have never before heard of us or our music sample, what we're capable of doing."



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30 HIT PARADER

"It's taken us some time to grow into what we want to be as a band."

BY AMOS STEVENS

After having flaunted their unique metal/hip-hop stylings over the last decade, with the release of their latest album, **Only In Amerika**, it appears as if the band known as HED p.e. may just now be fully hitting their stride. Having already laid down a solid foundation of musical support, thanks to such attention-grabbing discs as **Church of Realities**, **Broke** and their 2003 release **Blackout**, these days this L.A.-based unit seems more confident than ever before in their strident approach. When you throw in the band's incessant touring schedule for good measure, you begin to understand why this recently reconstructed unit—now consisting of vocalist Jahred, guitarist Jaxon, bassist Mark, drummer Moke and tableist DJ Product—seems so confident in their abilities. With the appearance of **Only In Amerika**, this fearless quintet seems to have come-of-age—a band no longer basking in the influence of their predecessors... and emerging as an influence all their own.

"It's taken us some time to grow into what we want to be as a band," Jahred said. "But I think we've gotten there on this album. I'm kind of glad that we've been able to let things develop naturally for us, without any great pressures placed on us by our new record label or the fans. We've seen too many of our friends have their attentions diverted by money, by fame or whatever. We'll never let that happen."

With the success of their latest disc, and the acceptance of their multi-faceted, multi-dimensional music by a wide-range of music loving fans, this Orange County-bred unit seems primed and ready to lead a full-out assault on hard rock's upper echelon. From the rip-roaring *Foreplay* to the surprisingly emotive *Truth*, it is clear that these guys have come a long way since their self-titled major label debut first introduced them to the rock masses back in 1997.

"This album is different than anything we've

done before," Jahred said. "This time we approached it very much from the musical perspective and we left our egos at the door. We didn't worry if a track didn't have as much guitar, or even if we were all playing on it. If a song didn't need it, then we left it alone.. We want to succeed as much as anyone, but we're not going to let any star-trips get in our way. We've really got all of that under control."

The HED p.e. gang have been perfecting their special rock and roll approach ever since Jahred and the band's original members first encountered one another back in 1994 while attending a variety of So Cal rock, punk, metal and hip-hop shows. At that moment the various musicians were serving time in competing hardcore groups, but their mutual desire to incorporate a far more expansive musical palate within the context of their rock formats instantly served to draw them together. Soon they all had hooked up and put the initial version of HED p.e. together, a group that was designed for a maximum degree of musical experimentation as well as a maximum degree of rock and roll impact. Over the ensuing years, as their albums met with varying degrees of critical and fan response, the HED p.e. patrol stuck to their guns. Tours with the likes of Korn, Metallica, Linkin Park, Slayer, Slipknot and System of a Down slowly but surely began to turn heads while turning the band into a true hard rock success story. Now, with the immediate acclaim placed upon **Only In Amerika** (which represents their first disc on a new label), it seems eminently apparent that this is one unit destined to continue leading metal's charge towards an exciting new frontier.

"It's real hard to be original these days," Jahred lamented. "There are so many bands out there, and so much good music that no matter what you do you're being compared to these guys or those guys. It can be great at times, and it can be frustrating. But you know what? We'll live with it."



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sam *goody*

Soooo... Motley Crue are back for another, full-scale, blow-the-roof-off-the-dump go around. And these legendary West Coast Wildmen—bassist Nikki Sixx, drummer Tommy Lee, vocalist Vince Neil and guitarist Mick Mars—sure ain't doin' this "reunion" tour with small expectations in mind. They've booked the biggest arenas in the nation (joints like New York's Madison Square Garden and L.A.'s cavernous Forum) with the full intent of turning their first major tour together in nearly a decade into a full-scale, no-holds-barred celebration of all things Motley. With the appearance of their recent "hits" col-

lection *Red, White and Crue*, this now middle-aged band seems intent on celebrating their two decades of heavy metal decadence in style. Sure, Mars is coming off of recent hip surgery, Lee's focus seems to be more on his stagnant hip-hop career, and Neil has recently been best known for his involvement in TV reality shows. But once they're all together in one place at one time, they're still the Baddest Band in the Land... the one and only Motley Crue. We recently spoke to Sixx (who's been a busy man himself in recent years, most notably with his *Brides of Destruction* project) about what it's like to once again be part of the Crue crew.

MOTLEY CRUE

AMERICAN ORIGINALS

BY PATRICK JAMES

Hit Parader: When we last spoke there seemed to be a lot of roadblocks surrounding this reunion. How did you get around those?

Nikki Sixx: There were some problems. We all had different lawyers and we were all involved in different projects at the time. I wasn't even sure if everyone wanted to do it. Getting everyone to focus on what needed to be done wasn't that easy. But we were determined to make this happen, so we worked through it, and I'm glad we did. What motivated this happening at this time was the constant demand from fans around the world. It was amazing. It was something that just started growing and hasn't stopped.

HP: Is it hard for you to believe that Motley Crue has been around for more than 20 years?

NS: When you start a band like Motley Crue, you think it might last for a few years before it burns itself out. Then when it gets to be ten years old, you think it may be time to end it. Well, now it's 20 years, and the time has come to celebrate that fact—and we're gonna do it the right way.

HP: How are the relationships within the band? We know that some of the guys hadn't exactly remained close over the years.

NS: It's pretty good. Tommy and Vince always have their moments. Look, we're like brothers, and we always have been. There are times we don't want to talk to one another or even be in the same room. But we always know that if one of us is in need, then we're all there for him. It's always been that way. The tough thing about getting everyone together for this tour was that we weren't getting together because of a prob-

lem... it was a *good* thing, and that's sometimes been an issue for us.

HP: What made you decide to book arenas?

NS: That's rather ambitious, don't you think?

NS: If we were gonna do this, we were gonna do it right. Enough time has passed since this

"THERE'S TOO MUCH MOTLEY CRUE IN ALL OF US FOR IT TO EVER TOTALLY DIE."

band has toured so that a lot of people really wanted to see us. A lot of the old fans think it maybe their last chance, and a lot of the younger ones want to see if everything they've read about and heard about is true. We're determined to show 'em that it is.

HP: Is it safe to say that "showing 'em" won't include the kind of lascivious lifestyle that almost did the bands in the first time around?

NS: I can only speak for myself. I've learned my lessons. But this is still Motley Crue. Everyone knows that this was never some sort of act with us. This band represented who and what we are. That will never change.

HP: What is the on-going appeal of Motley Crue?

NS: I've said it before, and I'll say it again, there's too much Motley Crue in all of us for it to ever totally die. Whatever happens in our lives, wherever we may be at any given time, Motley Crue is always with us. That's something I think we've all learned to accept. Yeah, we may try a few new things every now and then, but that's okay. We need to get those things out of our systems. Hopefully the drive and focus is still there to make every Motley live show on this tour the craziest thing anyone has ever seen or heard.

HP: It's been said that Motley Crue helped shape the sound and style of music in the '80s more than any other band. Is that a tough legacy to live up to?

NS: No, it's not. We've never tried to fit into any category. So whatever legacy we've created is just being us. Motley Crue is an ever-changing thing. I don't think anyone who's really followed our career over the years could ever accurately predict what we were going to do next. They couldn't because usually we didn't know. But that's true today too.

HP: There's a new musical world out there filled with kids who are listening to the likes of Slipknot. How does Motley Crue fit into that world?

NS: Rock and roll has always needed bands to come along and kind of blow the pipes clean. The Sex Pistols did it in the '70s, we did it in the '80s, and some of the bands are doing it today. That really has no impact on us at all. We never have tried to fit into any musical movement, are we're sure not going to now.

HP: Now that you're a family man, do you find the idea of going on the road a little less appealing than it used to be?

NS: We haven't been on the road in a long time, and I really miss it. There's a part in each of us that comes alive and comes together when we're on tour. That's when Motley Crue is really Motley Crue. I'm not saying we're gonna be as wild as we once were off stage, but when we're on stage we're gonna be wilder than ever. There's a part of me that's just reserved for this band. My wife knows it. When she sees me come through the door, she knows if the Motley Crue Nikki Sixx is there. If he is, she tells me to leave him at the door. Well, when we go on tour, that guy's definitely coming with me for the whole trip.



NIKKI SIXX

HP

"We seem to find ourselves in a really good position where people want to hear what we're doing."

For all that they've accomplished with the success of their recent disc, **The War Within**, things are about to get hotter for Shadows Fall...*much* hotter. With that disc having now sold nearly 200,000 copies, this Massachusetts-based progressive metal band find themselves sitting atop the hard rock world. Their exciting stage show has made them a prime target of headliners looking for road partners with widespread audience appeal. And their deft studio craftsmanship has made this unit the apple in the eye of a number of major labels. It is indeed a heady time for this ever-clever techno-metal unit. But despite their current acclaim, don't think for one second that things have come easily for vocalist Brian Fair, guitarists Matt Bachand and Jonathan Donais, bassist Paul Romanko and drummer David Germain. **The War Within** represents the culmination of this unit's eight year career, during which time they've released three previous discs, each of which has served to slowly build up the band's world-wide following.

"We've never felt the need to rush things," Fair said. "We've wanted to let this band develop at its own speed. There were times when what we were doing was really different than what a lot of other people were trying... and it still is. But tastes have changed, and now we seem to find ourselves in a really good position where people want to hear what we're doing. That's really cool."

Now things are about to go to the next level for this ambitious unit. Not only are Shadows Fall prime players on Slipknot's spring tour across the face of North America, but the band currently find themselves being wooed by a variety of major labels, each of whom believe that they can turn Shadows Fall into one of the biggest bands in the metal realm. With their penchant for creating diverse, deep and surprisingly melodic Dark Metal anthems—such as their recent hit *The Power of I*—and their ability to then translate and expand upon those basic structures upon the concert stage, Shadows Fall has managed to take a number of timeless metal ingredients and update them for the 21st Century.

"One of the best things about this band is that we've been willing to change with each album we've done," Fair said. "On **The War Within** I think we've gone in a heavier direction than in the past—especially in the sound of our guitars. The production quality on this album is just awesome! But we didn't *just* want to be heavy. There are some more 'classic' rock elements in the music, and we weren't afraid to throw in a few solos as well. It's a very exciting album in that it's very diverse, but something that a lot of people can feel comfortable with almost immediately."

For Shadows Fall their current role in the heavy metal spotlight comes after nearly a decade of perfecting their intricately detailed metal approach. Originally formed in 1996 by Donais, Bachand and original vocalist Phil LeBonte, Shadows Fall's initial intent was to try and capture the cutting edge energy and inherent majesty presented by many of that era's Scandinavian Dark Metal bands. However, being based 4,000 miles from that music's Swedish base, and operating at a time when such music was little more than a "cult" phenomenon on U.S. shores, the SF gang found little initial reaction to their efforts. But by 1997 the group felt strong enough about their creative vision to create a self-financed EP, *Somber Eye to the Sky*, a disc which opened eyes of both fans and concert promoters throughout the northeast.

A year later, the band decided that in order to both expand their sound and their audience, a new singer would have to be found, and former Overcast frontman Fair was recruited to fill the role. With their new vocalist aboard, Shadows Fall slowly went to work on their primary task—solidifying their fan base and centralizing their expansive sound. It took them until 2000 (following numerous European tours) to land a record deal and put together material for their debut disc, **Of One Blood**, a landmark achievement which instantly made Shadows Fall heroes of the burgeoning metal underground on both sides of the Atlantic. Still, it would be another four years—including the appearance of the band's highly lauded 2002 effort, **The Art of Balance**—before Shadows Fall truly began to receive the kind of recognition they deserved. That reaction was spawned by both the critical kudos awarded **The War Within**, and the attention drawn by the eye-popping performances given during their numerous concert tours, including their current road run with the Knot.

SHADOWS FALL

THE NEXT GENERATION

BY STEVE LEWIS

"Going on the road with Slipknot has been great for us because it's allowed us to touch upon a somewhat different audience," Fair said. "And having Lamb of God on the bill as well has been a lot of fun for us. We're all old friends, so we're having a great time off stage as well as on. Some people have wondered if perhaps we're taking a step back by playing third on this bill. It kind of makes me laugh to think about that. We're thrilled to be on a tour where people are excited about us... as well as about the other bands that are performing."

Shadows Fall's all-for-one attitude may soon be put to the ultimate test as the group's public profile continues to soar. Indeed, the rock rumor mill is abuzz with stories concerning the band soon signing a major label deal, one that promises to carry this quintet to the very pinnacle of metal acclaim. Still, Fair and his crew seem relatively unaffected by their recent flurry of good fortune. If a major label opportunity comes their way, so be it! If more great tours are offered, this unit will welcome them. Yet, despite all the rock and roll plums being cast in their direction, it seemingly remains hard to shake this unit's ever-cool, ever-calm demeanor.

"We're enjoying it, but we're not sweating over it," said Fair in regard to the band's major label attention. "It's really good that some very prestigious people at major labels have been in contact with us and made us feel very wanted. At the moment, we're still not exactly sure what we're going to do, but I can assure all the fans that no matter what we do, it won't change our musical focus one bit. Shadows Fall will continue to push the barriers as often and as hard as we can."



SHADOWS FALL

HP

SALEMS CRADLE

Rockin' It

BY LAUREN MICHAELS

There was a time in hard rock history when the Midwest was synonymous with guitar-driven action and high-voltage vocals. Of course, those halcyon days of Midwestern rock were virtually forgotten for more than two decades until the likes of Slipknot and Mudvayne reignited the region's metallic pride in the late '90s. All this quasi-historical info leads us to the arrival of a new generation of hard working, down-to-earth Midwestern rock and roll acts, most of whom grew up absorbing influences as divergent as West Coast hair metal and Seattle grunge rock in addition to their own corn-belt rock heritage. Some of these bands, like Quincy, IL,

went through the expected growing pains, originally starting out rock and roll life as a trio before evolving into the powerful quartet they are today. By mid-2003, constant touring throughout the Midwest, and a gradual expansion of their road market both eastward and westward convinced Kate and his crew that it was time to take the next big step—make an album. So early last year the band headed into a St. Louis recording studio to begin work on their self-titled debut disc. Working with former Machine Head guitarist Logan Mader at the production helm, within weeks the band had laid down such road-tested tracks as *Good Damage*, *Easy Empathy* and

Cookie, and seemed mighty gosh-darned pleased with the results they had achieved.

"We had written a lot of songs and had played them virtually every night on the road," Kate said. "By the time we had decided to make the album we felt pretty sure about which ones worked and which ones didn't. It was great having someone like Logan work with us because he's been there, and he knows how to really get things done in the studio. It's almost hard to describe how pleased we are with the way everything turned out."

One thing that the guys in Salems Cradle

natives Salems Cradle, have managed to take these wide-ranging, and occasionally conflicting styles and put their own unique stamp on them. Indeed, for guitarist/vocalist Jorge Kate, guitarist Matt Parker, drummer Danny Mabie and bassist Kyle Mabie, the very concept of putting a decidedly Midwestern seal of approval back on the classic hard rock style seems to be one of their prime purposes in life.

"When you grow up in a place like Quincy, you learn how to rock when you're young," Kate said. "But while the area does have a very noble rock heritage, I was just as influenced by bands like Motley Crue and Skid Row as well as groups like Tool and Nirvana. They're all in there someplace, and they've had an impact on the music that Salems Cradle makes. But I think we've managed to really put our own twist on things—which is something that makes me very proud."

Formed back in July, 2001 by Kate, Salems Cradle

"We've already done some really good tours in support of this album, and we can't wait to do more."

know for sure is that the release of their album is merely the beginning of what they sense will be a long, hard struggle for recognition. Without major label money behind them, and without a big name in their ranks to garner immediate press recognition, these Illinois noise boys know it's gonna be the quality of their music that will serve to make or break their burgeoning career. And you'd be hard pressed to find a unit more eager to have as many people as possible sample their hard rocking wares.

"We've already done some really good tours in support of this album, and we can't wait to do more," Kate said. "We were just out with Dry Kill Logic and American Head Charge, and that was incredible. We met a lot of new fans in places like Florida and California, and that was exactly what we had hoped to do. We know this isn't going to happen overnight for us. But we're from the Midwest—out there you learn how to be patient."



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For the Loeffler clan— better known to the rock and roll world as Chevelle— the success of their latest disc, **This Type of Thinking (Could Do Us In)**, stands as the crowing achievement of their five year career. For these three brothers— vocalist/ guitarist Pete, drummer Sam and bassist Joe— the album represents their coming-of-age. It is the effort that they hope will establish Chevelle as a perpetual force in the heavy metal world... a scene that in recent years has been dominated by a string of one-hit wonder bands that have left little of significance in their wake. But with **This Type of Thinking** following hot on the heels of the band's 2002 break-out effort, **Wonder What's Next**, it seems quite evident that this Chicago-based power trio won't have to worry about any such here-today, gone-later-today hard rock fate. It's clear that Chevelle are in the rock and roll "race" for the long haul.

"Sticking around and being successful at what we do is so important to us," Pete said.

"We've wanted to do this our entire

his tongue firmly planted in his cheek (we hope!) After touring the globe, and seeing sales for their first two albums (which also include their Steve Albini-produced debut, **Point #1**) amass a total in excess of two million copies, the bond linking this high-octane troika obviously runs much deeper than blood. Chevelle now stand as one of the premier bands of their generation, and they loudly and proudly prove that fact throughout their latest disc. On **This Type of Thinking**, the band has gone in a heavier, more intense direction— while sacrificing little of their surprisingly melodic appeal.

Metal has run its convenient course, the band finally seems to be on the verge of being recognized for what they truly are— a great, heavy rock and roll band.

"We always tended to laugh at all the categories we were put in," Pete said. "None of them really made much sense to us. We've always been a band that writes and plays hard rock songs. It's stuff that we like to think would have fit in during the '70s, the '80s or the '90s. It's not about trying to fit into any trend. We're *totally* the opposite of that. So people can try to squeeze us into some category if they want, but we're not an easy fit."

CHEVELLE

"Sticking around and being successful at what we do is so important to us."

THIRD GEAR

lives. It's all we ever spoke about when we were growing up. It used to drive our parents crazy! We'd always pretend that we were in a band, and we'd act like we were in a band. So now that we are in a band there's nothing that's gonna take this dream away!"

With their rock and roll dream apparently soldered directly into their genetic code, the Loeffler boys seem to be enjoying every second of their time in the rock and roll spotlight. With **Wonder What's Next** producing three hit singles in *Send the Pain Below*, *The Red* and *Closure*, and **This Type of Thinking** kicking things into high gear with the brother's ode to the Ritalin Nation, *Vitamin R*, it seems as if nothing is about to shake their faith in great songs, great rock and roll, or each other. But Pete is the first to admit that while it's nice to have family around, there are plenty of times he wished he had pursued a wider circle of musicians when it came time to choose permanent band members.

"Tearing and recording with your brothers can be tough," he said. "There are times when everything is great... but there are a lot of times when it's just pure chaos. There's so much history involved with everything we do and every decision we make. Sometimes I wish I was working with two guys who were just pure musicians and could make their decisions based just on the quality of the music. But that's not the way it was with us. Most of the time it's great to have 'em as brothers and bandmates, but other times I just want to leave 'em behind when we take off for the next city."

Of course, Pete says such things with

"When we've toured, it's tended to be with heavier bands," Pete said. "Being part of *Ozzfest* a few years ago really showed us the direction we wanted to go in. We started going in a heavier way on the last album, but this one is where we've been able to kick everything home. When we started to write songs for this album, that was the natural direction the material went in. We liked having heavier songs on the album, and they were also the most fun to play on stage. We wanted this album to be very raw and aggressive, and the fact that the fans seem to like it only justifies that decision."

With **This Type of Thinking** already standing as one of the year's best-selling hard rock collections, it indeed does seem as if the Loeffler clan has made all the right moves on their way to the top. Perhaps the most difficult task for these Midwestern rockers has been dodging the various "tags" that have been oh-so-conveniently dropped on them and their music since *Day One*. Originally pegged as an "alternative metal" unit due to both their Albini-connection and the fact that such a "distinction" was highly desired back in Y2K, Chevelle then evolved (at least in the media's eye) into a New Metal attraction with **Wonder What's Next**. Now that New

BY DAVID VOLKER

So they defy categorization. They defy trends. And they defy the laws of contemporary rock and roll logic which seem to dictate that a band's successful life span should be measured in weeks rather than years. Yup, Chevelle manage to walk, talk and rock to the beat of their own drummer, and with the immediate acclaim fostered upon their latest album and tour, they see little reason to change.

"Everything is going just the way we wanted," Pete said. "We're all really stoked about everything— especially the way the album turned out. There's so much more of an edge to this music... a *harder* edge. There always seems to be a temptation for a band following a fairly successful album to just play it safe and water everything down too much. We wanted to make sure that didn't happen to us. We went out of our way to make sure this album was a lot more aggressive— but without sacrificing any of the melody or dynamics that we like. The main thing we learned from our earlier success is to always believe in our own instincts. We're very confident now. When we began work on this one, we sensed exactly what we wanted to do— and we did it!"

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO



CHEVELLE

HP

JUDAS THE BEAST IS BACK PRIEST

BY P.J. MERKLE

"When we began the writing process for this album, there really wasn't much of a plan involved."

For more than 30 years now Glenn Tipton has lived at the very hub of the Judas Priest heavy metal machine. Along with fellow guitar ace K.K. Downing, and bassist Ian Hill, it has been Tipton that has stood at the Priest helm through thick and thin, guiding this legendary unit's path through the often murky currents of contemporary music taste. These days things are looking very bright for the Good Ship Priest, with returning hero Rob Halford now comfortably back aboard, the band's new disc, *Angel of Retribution*, drawing rave reviews and the band's North American arena tour packing houses wherever it decides to open its doors. Indeed, this is a special time in Priest's long and often glorious history, a fact we discussed with Tipton during a recent New York City stop-over.

Hit Parader: Now that you've had a few months to reflect back upon it, did *Angel of Retribution* turn out the way you had planned?

Glenn Tipton: That's a somewhat tricky question because when we began the writing process for this album, there really wasn't much of a plan involved. That's the way it's always been when Rob, K.K. and I work. We fell back into the old habits almost instantly—even if we hadn't worked together in over a decade. Once the songs started, we knew we were on the right track, so we let our instincts dictate the direction the songs were going to take.

HP: This has already been labeled a "classic" Priest album by many. Obviously, that must please you.

GT: It certainly does. You always know in the back of your mind that what might be satisfying to us may not hit a responsive nerve with the fans. But we're confident—or dare I say arrogant—enough at this point to believe that we know what will please the fans. That's exactly what we set out to deliver on this album. We knew the direction we wanted to take, and we knew how to execute what we felt needed to be done.

HP: Is there a "secret" meaning to the title *Angel of Retribution*?

GT: It's something that came up during the recording sessions, and it hit us all the right way. There was an element of the reuniting with Rob involved with it, and there was the fact that if fans didn't respond to this album they'd have to deal with the angel of retribution. It's kind of amusing, yet very much in the Priest philosophy.

HP: The sound quality on the album is incredible. Do you ever go back to early Priest albums and wish you could re-record them with modern technology?

GT: I agree that this one does sound incredible. A lot of that credit has to go to our producer, Roy Z, who seems to know how to get a band to sound their best in the studio. But, no, to

answer the other part of your question, I never think about what those earlier albums might sound like now. They're testaments to what Priest was, and where heavy metal music was, at the time they were recorded. As such, I'm very happy to leave them alone and let them stand on their own merit.

HP: You mention "where metal was at the time." How do you view the current state of heavy metal?

GT: I think there's a lot of talent out there, but some of those bands might need a little spurring to play in a somewhat different way. I'm sure there are young guitarists who could play rings around me, but they're a little timid when it comes to showcasing their talents and playing solos. When done properly there's nothing wrong with that. I realize it had reached a period of incredible self-indulgence at one point in the '80s, but they turned their backs on that too radically in the '90s. I think it's coming back in a healthy way, and if Judas Priest can help push it along a little, then that's exactly what we'll try to do.

HP: Obviously, you're exposing a lot of young rockers to Priest's music through this album and tour. Was there ever any concern about booking arenas?

GT: There seemed to be a demand for us playing arenas on this tour, and for that we're very thankful. Priest's music has always sounded its best in big halls, so this has been a wonderful way of both presenting what our long-time fans wanted, and hopefully introducing a new generation of fans to the music of Judas Priest.

HP: How does Priest prepare for a tour?

GT: By not doing very much (laughs.) Actually, that's quite true. We've never been much of a rehearsal band. We figure if we don't know the songs by now, we probably never will. Actually, whenever we have new crew people involved we can see the looks of nervous apprehension in their eyes when they hear us in a rehearsal space. They're thinking "My god, they've got

an arena show on Saturday... they're *not* ready." Well, invariably the pieces all come together, and by the time we step on stage everything is absolutely fine.

HP: How did you decide on the number of songs from *Angel of Retribution* to play on this tour?

GT: That's continuing to evolve. On the *Ozzfest* tour last summer, we only played older, more familiar songs. On this tour not only have we featured those, along with selected new songs, but we've also delved back into the Priest catalog to play some of the more obscure things that the real fans have always wanted to hear us play. It's a very interesting balance.

HP: After touring the world for more than three decades, is there any excitement to being on the road—other than the two hours you spend on stage each night?

GT: That's the price you pay for doing what you love. The two hours on stage more than compensate for the difficulties of travel, being away from home and the general malaise of living out of a suitcase for months on end. I do my best to enjoy myself and get the most out of the opportunities that touring provide. You can just stay sequestered in your hotel room between shows, or you can get out and see the cities, go to museums, learn something. I find that quite challenging and quite entertaining—even after all these years.

HP: What would a normal day on the road be like for you?

GT: That's almost impossible to say because there are so many variables involved. If we have driven all night from one city to another, it will be very different than if we've spent the night after a show in a hotel and are traveling that day. I try to get some sleep while we travel, but that's not always easy. Obviously preparing for the show that night is the central element of every day. But if I have time I would like to go to an interesting museum or gallery and try to hit a nice restaurant or two. Certainly there's nothing too outrageous there.



JUDAS PRIEST

JP

COMIN' AT YOU!

SAME QUESTION, DIFFERENT BANDS

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

This month's edition of *Comin' At You* focuses on the Roadrunner Records 25th Anniversary Road Rage tour. The annual tour, which has featured the likes of Machine Head, Chimaira, and Spineshank in the past, is sponsored by Roadrunner Records, the label responsible for launching the careers of metal heavyweights like Slipknot, Killswitch Engage, Sepultura, Fear Factory and Type O Negative. This Spring's tour features the freshman class of Roadrunner. It's the newest, hottest crop of band's the label is putting its money on. *Hit Parader* spoke to each band about the tour, their fond recollections of Roadrunner, and what they sound like. Read on...

AGONY SCENE:

Hailing from Oklahoma, The Agony Scene look dark and scary, and sound even more frightening. Their Roadrunner Records debut, *The Darkest Red* piles screechy vocals on top of dirty, rock-metal riffing. Singer Mike Williams had the following to say about his band, his label, and the tour.

What They Sound Like: Williams cringed a bit, claiming this is "always the hardest question to answer." We know that, but he was a trooper and answered it anyway. "Our music is heavy. It's insanely heavy and melodic. Oh, why don't you just make something up that sounds good so that we sound good," the singer joked. Okay. We say that TAS are heavy. Insanely heavy and melodic. We're not going to do *all* the work for them!

Favorite Roadrunner band past or present: Read on and you'll find out that this a popular answer! The masked metal marauders are loved and admired by up 'n coming Roadrunner bands. "Slipknot. And I'm serious. Everything they have done is incredible," Williams explains.

Reflections On Roadrunner: TAS are countin' their blessings, and are excited about their newfound partnership with a massive metal record company. "We're thrilled to be where we are," the singer says. "A lot of Roadrunner bands have influenced us heavily. I think it's good. We're definitely not going to say, 'It's a horrible thing and now we're stuck there. No way!'"

Best Thing About This Tour: Touring with your labelmates is like touring with a brother and sister, and TAS are psyched about the camaraderie. "We met the dudes from Trivium and 3 Inches Of Blood before, and we hope to make some friends," Williams says. "All of the bands are good and we're going to have a good time playing every night."



STILL REMAINS:

TJ Miller

Hailing from Grand Rapids, MI, Still Remains caught the attention of Roadrunner A&R reps with their EP, *If Love Was Born To Die*. The young band meld European metal melodies and conventions (like keyboards) with American standards like moshy breakdowns and moshy, screamy parts on their Roadrunner debut, *Of Love And Lunacy*. Singer TJ Miller gave us his bird's eye view of his band and their new label.

What They Sound Like: Again, this question stumps the bands! "I don't know what I would call our style," Miller says. "It's been called New Wave Of American Heavy Metal, and we draw influence from In Flames and Soilwork, and we want to show America that hey, you don't have to go to Europe to hear this kind of music." Keeping it in the country, they are!

Reflections On Roadrunner: Signing to Roadrunner and sharing roster space with bands they loved is a dream actualized for Still Remains, who say they grew up listening to Machine Head, Sepultura, and Soulfly. The young singer says, "I remember we'd always fantasize about being signed. Metal Blade would be sweet. Solid State would be cool, too. We grew up listening to bands on those labels. We'd joke around and think Roadrunner would be awesome, but we thought there was no chance in hell that we would sign there. We're amazed that we signed to Roadrunner, and we laugh about it, because we joked about it because we thought it was impossible."

Favorite Roadrunner band, past or present? The legend that is Max Cavalera (of Sepultura, Soulfly, and Nailbomb fame) are high on Still Remains' list of favorite Roadrunner artists. "I used to be really into the Deftones," says Miller. "That introduced me to Soulfly. I was into them in high school. I like them a lot. I didn't like Slipknot at all in high school, but now they are my favorite Roadrunner band. They are my favorite metal band of all time. I saw them in Vancouver with Killswitch Engage and Unearth. It blew me away."



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Best Thing About This Tour: The fact that Roadrunner are applying their brand and tag to a bunch of new, unproven bands is something that Still Remains have a lot of respect for. "Roadrunner is taking the 'Road Rage' label and putting it to new bands that they are excited about. It is amazing that they are saying 'We have this new wave of bands that are going to be big in the next few years, so we are putting them out together now,'" says Miller.

3 INCHES OF BLOOD:

Brian Redman

3 Inches Of Blood are a heavy metal throwback. The vocals of singer Cam Pipes are larger than [Insert Fat Person's Name]'s waistline. They are siren-like, and can give Rob Halford a run for his money. The band also rips out guitar solos and leads like it was 1987 all over again. *Advance And Vanquish*, unleashed last fall, turned many heads, thanks to its tall, fantastical tales about orcs, fires on the bridge, and deadly sinners. If you like to play *Dungeons And Dragons* and bang your head, than 3IOB will work you into a lather. We spoke to guitarist Brian Redman about the same things we spoke to Miller and Williams about.

What They Sound Like: Like their music, Redman's description of his band is over the top. "The band is a hybrid of traditional heavy metal and the teeth and the balls of the new aggressive thrash metal. Lots of high pitched screaming and hollering," he says. Get your earplugs and wrap the glass valuables in bubble paper, because 3IOB have the power to shatter eardrums and glass products!

Reflections On Roadrunner: Redman jokes that the band got to the label's heart through its stomach! "We baked a whole batch of cookies and we sent them. Roadrunner loves our baking and our peanut butter chocolate chip cookies," he laughs. Of course, he is kidding. In reality, the live show was what sealed the deal. "I have had a small involvement with labels in the past with other bands I was in," Redman says. "A lot of people have skepticism on the label as 'the man,' but everyone at Roadrunner is killer and has made themselves completely available. We had a rocky transition through the summer, but through all that, it has been cool to see people that don't have to fight for us actually fight for us."

Favorite Roadrunner band, past or present: The Brazilian culture clash of music and metal of Sepultura and the opera rock of Nightwish own the heart of this guitarist! "I'm a huge Sepultura fan. Arise and Roots are killer records that I dig. Of the new Roadrunner bands? Hmm. I really like Nightwish a lot. The album *Once* is phenomenal," he says.

Best Thing About This Tour: "It's like the freshman class at Roadrunner," Redman says about the tour. "The Agony Scene has a bass player nicknamed Brain and that's my nickname. He likes whiskey and I like whiskey. There will be a good energy on the tour! We'll make t-shirts or something. We're the new kids on the block." We think that pretty soon, all these bands will be taking over the metal world and their status as "NKOTB" will long be a thing of the past!



TRIVIUM:

18 years old. That's how old singer/guitarist Matt Heafy was when he recorded his Florida band's Roadrunner debut, *Ascendancy*. Now older and wiser that ripe age of 19, Heafy doesn't show his youth. His professionalism and his playing are mature beyond his years; he's an old soul encased in a young body. *Ascendancy* is rife with guitar solos and melodies, and it's got as much in common with 1985 as it does with 2005. Heafy, a recent high school graduate, weighs in on the Road Rage tour, who his band sounds like, and Roadrunner. We know. Same questions, different band.

What They Sound Like: Trivium have aspirations and goals, and they definitely pay their respect to their forefathers. Or foregrandfathers, if you take their age into as much account as possible. "Our sound is reminiscent of the glory days of Metallica, Megadeth, Pantera, with Iron Maiden mixed in, as well," says Heafy with confidence. We agree, and must admit that the album does have a modern edge to it, as well. There's something for old schoolers and new on *Ascendancy*.

Reflections On Roadrunner: Yes, it's every hard rock band's dream to get signed to a record label, but Roadrunner is often viewed as the Gold Standard

of metal labels. Trivium are not different. "Since I grew up listening to all Roadrunner bands, from 1999 through 2001, it was a dream that we would get signed there. I couldn't believe. Every day after Monte Conner called my dad, who was our manager at the time, I turned on metal channels, there was Sepultura. On the radio, there was Nickelback. Every music channel had Roadrunner bands. On *Headbanger's Ball*, they always play Roadrunner bands. It was dream come true. Other labels were interested in us, but we chose Roadrunner because it really delivers. They can sell the records and grow a band. Major labels don't grow a band, and indies don't have the financial support." Spoken like a seasoned vet, right? Wise beyond their years, these boys are!

Favorite Roadrunner band, past or present: Again, Slipknot gets mentioned as a 'favorite' by a neophyte Roadrunner band. "It's tie between Slipknot or Machine Head. I started listening to those band when I was 12. Slipknot was the heaviest I ever heard. And Machine Head was my first metal show, and Robert Flynn was an incredible frontman."

Best Thing About This Tour: "I think that all four bands are the same level. The last Road Rage tour, we were up there with 2 big bands, one which is legendary. We were the poor kids hanging out with the rich kids on that tour. Everyone was cool but still. WE were so new. Everyone is level headed, all in vans with trailers, we're all peers. That's the best part for us."



AUDIOSLAVE BACK WITH

in May—seeming to emerge out of nowhere, surrounded by little of the pre-release “hype” that so often goes hand-in-hand with a major album. But, according to the ever-contemplative Morello, that “under the radar” approach was *exactly* what Audioslave had in mind.

“We learned a lot with the first album,” the guitarist said. “One of those things was to keep our mouths shut until the time was right, and another was to really guard our music carefully. Some of the songs on the first album popped up on the internet six months before it came out. So this time we just kept everything to ourselves, and it seemed to work out much better.”

There’s no question that on their sophomore effort, Audioslave comes across as a more focused and cohesive unit than ever before. While on their initial effort, the raw energy and charisma of the band’s members seemed to carry the proceedings along at a break-neck pace, this time around the music seems to follow a more logical and somewhat more expansive pattern. On songs like *Your Time Has Come*, *The Curse* and *Out of Exile*, this unit still rocks with power and passion, but they also seem to do so with a less formulated and reserved nature. Quite simply, this time it seems like these four legendary rockers are truly enjoying themselves to the max!

“The spontaneity involved with the making of this music is what stands out for me,” Morello said. “There wasn’t as much careful planning and consideration—at least in terms of my playing. I thrived on

For the members of Audioslave, the release of their second album, *Out of Exile*, has been surrounded by a far different atmosphere that the disquieting ambience that accompanied the arrival of their self-titled debut disc back in 2002. Back then, this all-star band comprised of former Soundgarden vocalist Chris Cornell, and ex-Rage Against The Machine members Tom Morello (guitar), Brad Wilk (drums) and Tim Commerford (bass) seemed to be walking on thin ice, with rumors of their premature demise filling rock wires around the globe. But having weathered that brief but jarring internal storm, this unit rallied to emerge as one of the premier bands of the early 21st Century. Their string of hits, including *Cochise*, *Like a Stone* and *Set It Off* reached fans across the rock and roll board, while their dynamic live show made them concert headliners from Los Angeles to London.

“The biggest difference between where the band is now and where it was a few years ago is that we are a *band* now,” Wilk said. “There’s no question in my mind that last time we brought people together who had been in two different bands and tried to combine our styles. This time it’s four guys from the *same* band making music... BIG difference!”

Quite obviously this is the dawning of a new day for Audioslave. With *Be Yourself*, the lead track from their latest album, quickly emerging as one of the most heavily played tracks on rock radio stations across the nation, it seems as if the platinum-covered success enjoyed by this quartet a few years ago has only served as the springboard for what is now to come. Indeed, Audioslave’s new disc burst upon the rock scene



“The biggest difference between where the band is now and where it was a few years ago is that we are a true band now.”

going to our recording sessions and just jumping into it. We have so much confidence in one another now that we felt we could pull off that kind of approach.”

Now, as this world-renowned supergroup prepares to hit the tour trail, it appears as if many of the problems that first negatively colored Audioslave’s artistic persona have been effectively eradicated. Yes, their sophomore effort will appear on a different label than their debut—an unprecedented arrangement for a band of this stature—but such ground-

AVE

BY MICHAEL JOSEPH

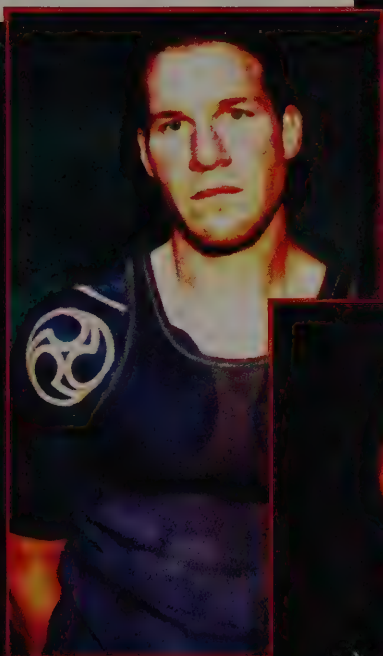
A VENGEANCE!

breaking status seems to go with the territory for Audioslave. In case you were wondering about the reason behind this highly unusual business practice (and we *know* you were!) here it is: one label retained rights to Cornell due to his still-valid "personal services" contract dating back to his days with Soundgarden, while the other held a similar contractual hold on the former members of Rage Against the Machine.

"We knew this situation (with the labels) existed from the moment we got together," Morello said. "But after our initial problems, we knew that we weren't about to let anything distract us from our primary purpose—and that clearly is to create the best music we can. It's never been to feed the rumor mill or satisfy the expectations of others."

Back in '02 all this label conflict seemed destined to bring Audioslave to a crashing halt before it had time to even begin. But thankfully, cooler heads soon prevailed and it was agreed that Audioslave's debut disc would emerge on the label retaining Rage Against the Machine's services, with the band's second disc reverting to the other company. In light of the amazing success enjoyed by Audioslave, it's easy to understand why every label on earth would welcome this unit with open arms. Rather than threatening to create new headaches, such a situation now promises this fearsome foursome even greater artistic control. Indeed, as they begin Round Two of their already laudatory career, it seems as if *nothing* can stop the rock and roll juggernaut known as Audioslave.

"They originally recorded 20 tracks



"We've been very pleased by the way the fans have responded to everything we've done."

with Rick Rubin," an inside source explained. "14 of those are on Audioslave. The rest were originally going to comprise a bulk of the second album. But they've been so creative over the last few months that I doubt if any of the older tracks survived the final cut."

It should be fascinating to see how the rock world reacts to Audioslave the second time around. After all, there are those who will unequivocally insist that the band's debut disc

was the best "pure" hard rock album of the last decade—an album filled with wall-shaking riffs and classic-metal pretensions. And there are those who will state their belief that the disc was a major disappointment—an overly contrived offering designed for mass success

by a band capable of so much more. Perhaps with the release of their second album, we'll discover who was right.

"We've been very pleased by the way the fans have responded to everything we've done," Commorford said. "When you start a band like this, you never know exactly what to expect. Fans, the media, the people at the record label, all have certain expectations. Some are realistic... some are not. We've done the best job we know how to the best band we can."



SLIPKNOT

BY RYAN CLINE

WHAT'S NEXT FOR METAL'S MASKED MEN?

They've been carefully avoiding the question for more than a year. But as their incredibly successful world tour draws to an apparent end, it appears as if Slipknot is preparing to close the books on the latest chapter in their storied career. With their latest disc, **Vol. 3: The Subliminal Verses** a platinum-selling smash, their road ventures standing as sold-out spectacles, their most recent home DVD collection a chart-topping best-seller, and their videos for such songs as *Vermilion* and *Duality* achieving the distinction of Grammy nominations, it's clearly been an incredible time for this Midwestern shock rock contingent. But as d.j. Sid Wilson, bassist Paul Gray, guitarist James Root, drummer Joey Jordison, keyboardist Craig Jones, percussionist Chris Fehn, percussionist Shawn Crahan, guitarist Mick Thomson and vocalist Corey Taylor (also known by the Knot-names 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8) begin to look ahead, they do so with an almost tangible sense of uncertainty.

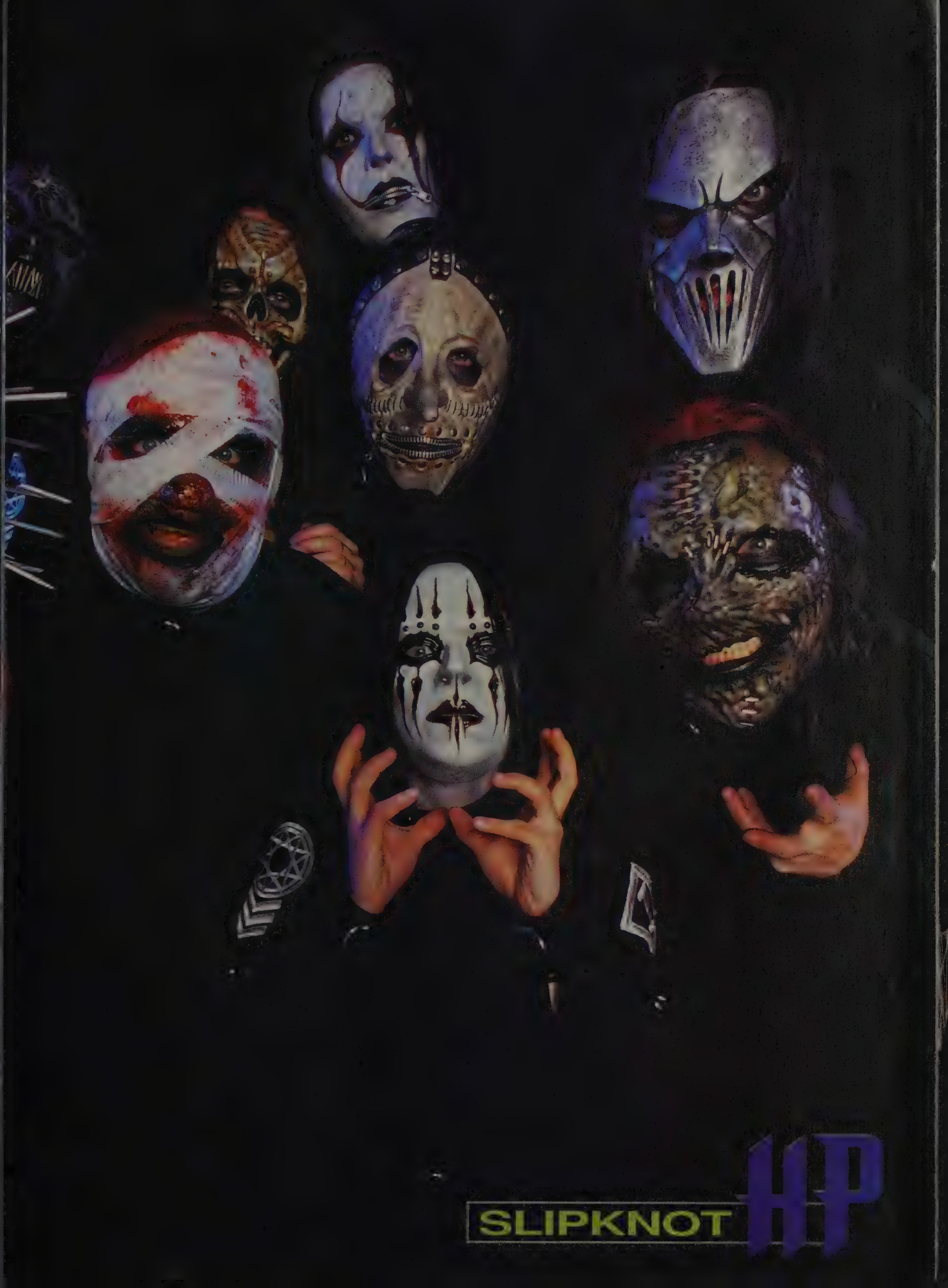
It's not as if these now-legendary masked merchants of metallic mayhem wonder what they'll be doing next or how they'll be earning a living. Indeed, they seem to know all-too-well that the remainder of 2005 will be a time filled with exciting career promises and fulfilling artistic projects. But as they gear up for what any other band would consider hard-earned "down time" away from the rigors of the rock and roll world, these Des Moines-based metal men know that the decisions they will make over the next few months may well dictate the future path upon which Slipknot traverses in the years to come.

"We're just going to do what we do," Taylor said. "I'm not gonna make any big pronouncements to anyone concerning what I think Slipknot should do or when we should do it. I think I learned some lessons last time. I tend to be a very honest guy who answers the questions that are asked of me. But last time, before we began work on **The Subliminal Verses**, I was probably too honest. There's no need to speculate about things—especially not now."

The root of Taylor's 2003 speculations centered upon the on-going status of Slipknot. At that time it was widely stated that **Vol. 3** might represent that band's swan song, that internal pressures, as well as the lure provided by the band member's surprisingly successful outside projects, might spell a premature demise for the most revered and reviled heavy metal band of their era. But following in the wake of the incredible success that the Knot has enjoyed over the last year, it seems that such drastic opinions have been dramatically tempered. Yes, Taylor will go and make another album with his band Stone Sour. And yes, Jordison will once again crank up the amps with his '80s-styled hard rock unit, the Murderdolls. But now it seems more likely than not that at day's end (which will proba-

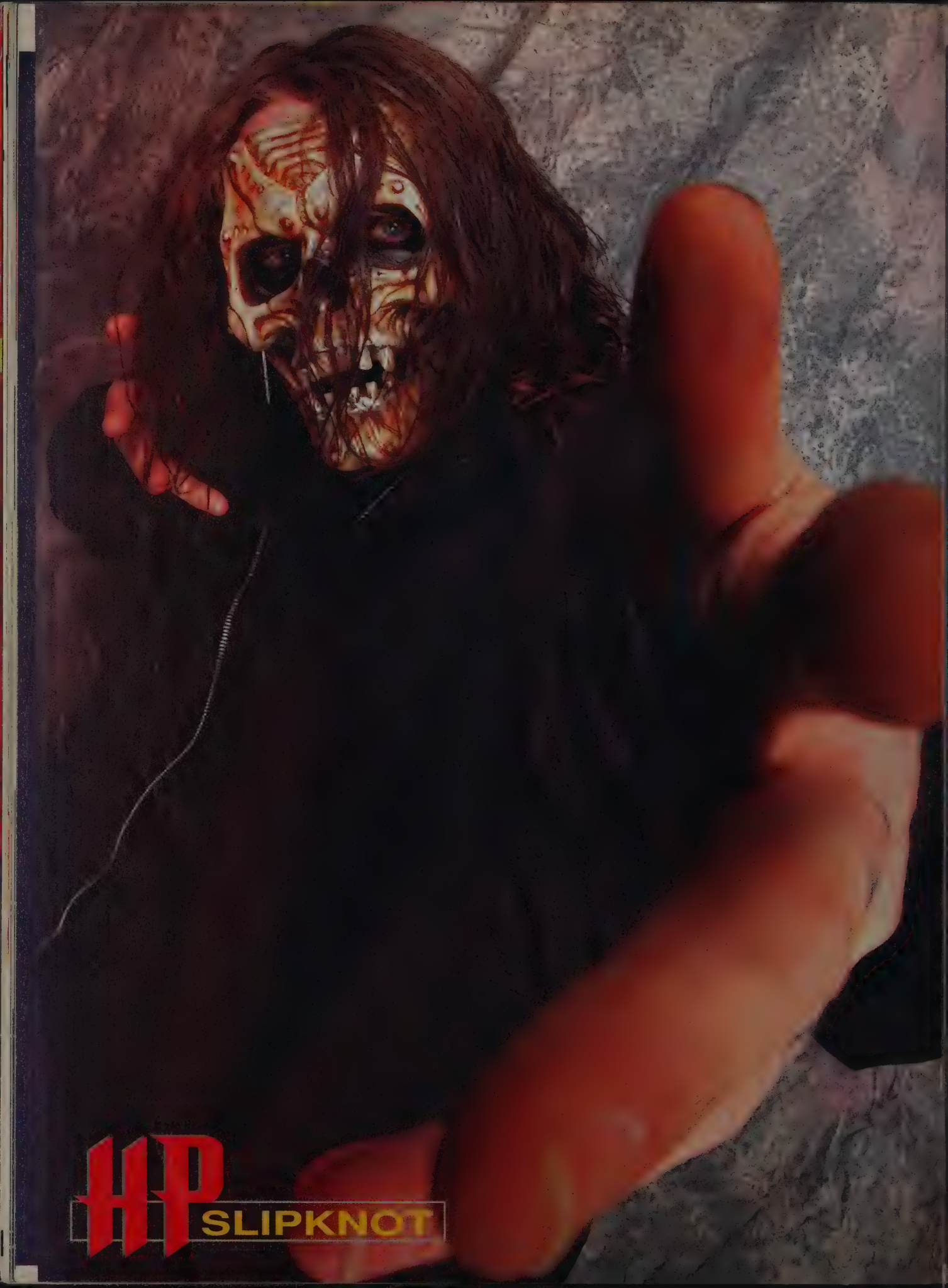
"I'm not gonna make any big pronouncements to anyone concerning what I think Slipknot should do."





SLIPKNOT

HP



HP
SLIPKNOT

bly be near the tail-end of 2006, the lure to once again hoist the Slipknot rock and roll banner will draw the members of this Nine Man Mutant Metal Army back together.

"It seems as if they've all found out a way to make this all work," said an on-the-scene source. "Of course, with Slipknot everything is always a little up in the air. But they're so much more together and better organized this time. They have management now that seems to totally understand them, and is able to get them to look past the small problems that crop up to see the bigger picture. I think everyone involved is very proud of what Slipknot has achieved over the last 18 months. If they want to take a little break they certainly deserve it. And who are we to question how they spend their free time? Whether it's relaxing on some beach or making music with another band, that's their business!"

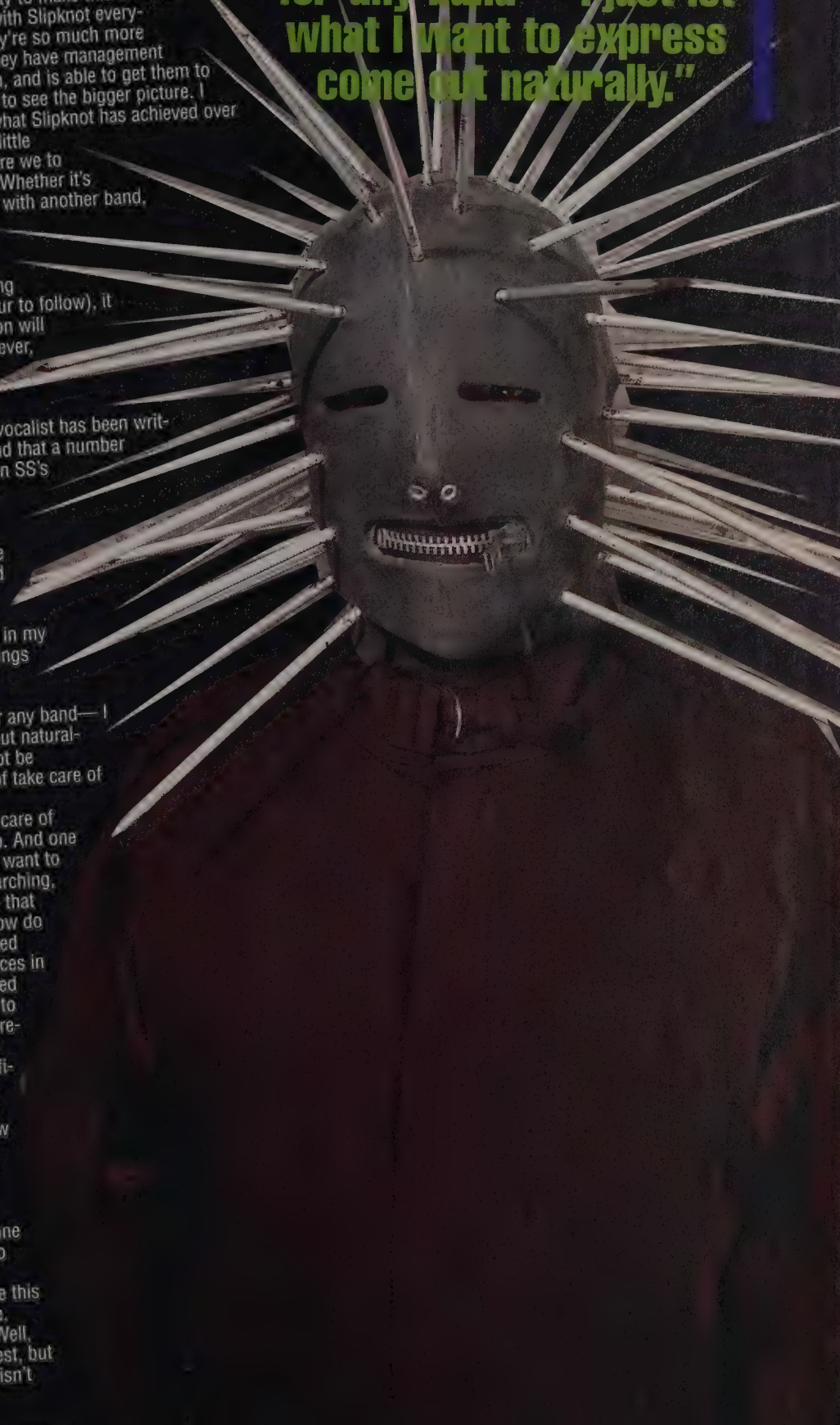
So when might all this other "business" begin to take place? Well, with Murderdolls vocalist Wednesday 13 having recently released a solo album (with a tour to follow), it seems highly unlikely that any Dolls action will commence much before years end. However, in the case of Stone Sour—which in addition to Taylor also features Root—things may start to take shape a bit sooner. It is known that the vocalist has been writing new songs on his acoustic guitar, and that a number of these seem destined to be included on SS's sophomore release rather than on any future Knot disc. Taylor is the first to admit that at times his ever-changing writing style seems more geared for the moody-yet-heavy melodicism employed by Stone Sour than for the full-brunt attack of Slipknot.

"There's a chance that at some point in my future, I may just make an album of songs I've written acoustically," he said. "But I don't think that's going to happen very soon. I don't focus my writing for any band—I just let what I want to express come out naturally. I don't worry if something might not be right for Slipknot. Those issues kind of take care of themselves."

But while creative issues may take care of themselves, business issues rarely do. And one thing is for certain... Slipknot doesn't want to go through the same kind of soul-searching, heart-tearing internal conflict in 2005 that they experienced back in 2003. So how do nine strong-minded, incredibly talented musical forces align their creative juices in such a way that egos don't get bruised when some of their members go on to enjoy solo success, while others merely sit by the sidelines waiting for the Knot to reform? It is obviously a difficult and tricky task. But having already survived one such ordeal, it would seem that experience will now serve as the precursor for a better understanding of Slipknot's sometimes delicate internal chemistry.

"They went to the edge and survived," said our insider. "Having done that once, I don't think they want to try that again. There was so much speculation a year ago about where this album would stand in Slipknot lore. Would it be the best, or the last? Well, Vol. 3 may well have been their best, but I think it's fairly safe to say that it isn't going to be the last."

"I don't focus my writing for any band—I just let what I want to express come out naturally."







SLIPKNOT

HP

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

The members of Mudvayne have always been just a little different from your conventional heavy-metal band. Oh sure, these Illinois natives made their rep a few years back with explosive discs like *L.D. 50* and *The End of All Things to Come*... along with shock-rock tactics that included dressing themselves in some of the most outrageous stage gear on this side of Slipknot. But things have rather radically changed for vocalist Chad Gray, guitarist Greg Tribbett, bassist Ryan Martine and drummer Matt McDonough. Or perhaps more correctly we should say that they've evolved. As this power-packed quartet prepare to hit the road in support of their latest explosive collection, *Lost and Found*, the wild stage garb is no more, replaced by more "sedate" rock-and-roll attire. But rather than stating that this was some carefully planned move to distance themselves from the rest of the shock-rock pack, this unit insists that it is more the end result of a slow, gradual evolutionary process. That fact, along with many others, served as the crux of our recent conversation with the war-torn formation.

Hit Parader: There has been so much speculation about why Mudvayne has dropped the makeup and the wild stage cloths. What's the true story?

Matt McDonough: The great misconception that a lot of fans seem to have is that we held a band meeting at some point last year and just decided to stop wearing the makeup on stage. Nothing could be further from the truth. It was *never* a conscious decision on our part. It was something that happened very gradually, and very naturally over the last few years. I think you'd have to go back to 2002 to see where the progression to this point began. That's when we began to occasionally go on stage with very scaled-down makeup, and by the time we toured with

Found, and by doing so we've created the best album of our career. There is a natural growth that's evident here. We're not the same band that made *L.D. 50*. We've learned so much, and we've grown up a lot as musicians and as people. All that is reflected in this music.

HP: Did the band go into the creative process for *Lost and Found* with certain goals in mind... and if you did, how surprised were you by the results you achieved?

MM: That's an interesting question because there were times when we all found our-

tion ourselves a little bit. But once we did, we realized that what we were creating was very special— even if it was a little different.

HP: Give us a little insight into the creative process that goes into a typical Mudvayne song.

MM: It can depend on a number of factors, but a lot of the time it's based around us jamming on an idea until it begins to take shape. But nothing is formulaic. Greg may come up with a riff, and then I'll kick in and start working with him. Then Ryan will add his perspectives on it until it begins to form an actual song. At some point Chad will react to what we're doing, and if it inspires him, he'll start putting together some lyrics. Obviously, not all the songs happen that easily or that

THE BIG RISK MUDVAYNE

Metallica in 2003, we weren't wearing any makeup at all. It was something that just happened— not something that was planned.

HP: Would it be a mistake to say that the makeup had served its purpose for Mudvayne?

MM: That's an interesting way of looking at it... and I'd have to agree with that. When we first started wearing makeup, it certainly made people notice. It was definitely very dramatic. But it wasn't any sort of marketing tool; if anything, it was an *anti*-marketing tool. I can remember going into a club in the early days and maybe there were 30 people in there. Within 15 minutes they had all left. We intimidated them with the way we looked. So it did draw attention— even if it wasn't always in the way we wanted. But now the focus needs to shift. The music is so strong on this album that we believe that nothing should overshadow it in any way.

HP: It seems while your look may have changed, the intensity of your music has not.

MM: That's it, exactly. But while there is a great deal of intensity to this music, there's also an accessibility that may not have been there before. A lot of these songs are melody-driven, which isn't something you could say about a lot of the material on the first two albums. I think we've managed to develop a not-so-delicate balance between intensity and accessibility on *Lost and*

BY ROB ANDREWS

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**WEARING—
OR NOT
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quickly, but that's the basic pattern for almost everything we wrote for this album.

HP: You've already completed a "guerrilla" promo tour for the album, playing small, hip clubs around the nation. What's next in terms of your road work?

MM: The Guerrilla Tour was great because it allowed us to get really close with a lot of the fans. Sometimes when we've played bigger halls, that kind of connection is lost. And now that we'll be returning to bigger places for our actual tour, our goal is to try and maintain that kind of contact no matter where we may be playing. But one of our goals this year is to not only play bigger places in major U.S. markets, but it's to get all over the world. There are still a lot of places where we've never been.

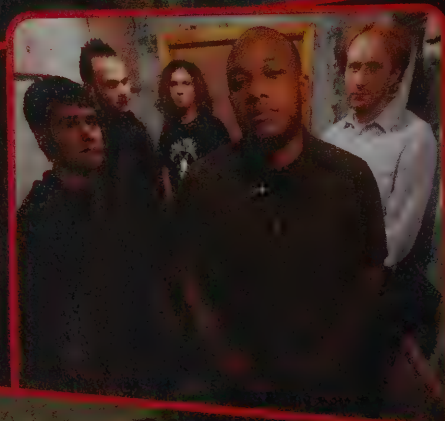
HP: What markets would be at the top of your "tour travel" destinations?

MM: We've never played in South America, and being part of one of those big Brazilian festivals would be amazing. We also haven't had the chance to tour in Eastern Europe, and that's very high on the priority list. And, except for Japan— where we've toured once— we've never been in Asia. So to say the least, there are a lot of places for us to get to this year... and we will! But the priority for the moment is making sure the album gets off to a great start in America, and then we'll be ready to take on the world!



MUDVAYNE





Do you feel you have gotten to the point that you don't even need to mention your original singer, Jesse Leach? Do you feel that Howard has made his mark?
I wish it got to that point, people still ask that question, every day of my life. It still comes up, even now. "How long has Howard been in the band?" Ten times as long as Jesse ever was. I don't get it, dude, but it's still brought up. Forgive me, I was a bad boy last night. I went to bed without brushing my teeth. I was so drunk. When I am drunk, I steal things outside the club and hide them in the tour bus. "What is Adam stockpiling in our bus?" The bus driver got so mad. I plead innocent, because most of the time, I don't even remember what I do when I am intoxicated!

KILLSWITCH ENGAGE

MAKING THEIR MOVE

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

"This is all about having fun."

All good. Did you guys ever expect to get as big as you have gotten?

Not at all. We were doing this for fun. That's it. For fun. It's been great, though.

Why have heavy music fans gravitated to Killswitch?

I don't know. Maybe people like crappy music! [laughs] Seriously, I don't have an answer for you.

Would you ever leave Killswitch Engage to focus on your production career?

If the band got crappy, I would, yes. But as of now, no. Producing is what I love doing. I also love touring, as well. I am trying to find the "Art Of Balance," like the Shadow's Fall album. [laughs].

How did you get into production work?

Actually, I started writing and recording music on my own and that sparked an interest and then I went to school to study production and engineering and all that stuff. It is starting to become lucrative.

You are famous for your crazy on-stage antics. Do you ever plan or choreograph your moves or is it all spontaneous?

Do you think it would be choreographed? Come on. It's about having fun. I was white trash for Halloween. I was wearing trash bags on stage. The whole first song, I was in a trash barrel! It was a big Rubbermaid trashcan. I don't know. I played. I don't know. It just happens. It's me thinking I am wittier than I really am. To me, it's the funniest thing in the world, to everyone else, they might be scratching their heads.

Tell us a little about your side project with Ken Susi, guitarist of Unerth.

Killswitch Engage, along with Shadows Fall and Lamb Of God, are one of the hottest up 'n coming bands in the modern heavy metal scene. But there's a catch. Almost immediately after the release of *Alive Or Just Breathing*, their

Roadrunner debut and second album overall, their immensely talented singer, Jesse Leach, abruptly exited the band, due to voice and personal issues. Most bands would have been crippled by the loss of their frontmen. But Killswitch rebounded with Howard Jones, importing him from Connecticut hardcore band Blood Has Been Shed, and went on to sell more records, get on higher profile tours and sell out every venue that they headlined. In fact, the loss of their singer wound up being the best thing that ever happened to them. KsE emerged like the indie underground's version of AC/DC, making what could be their best record with *The End Of Heartache*, which at press time, has scanned nearly 200,000 copies in a half a year of release. KsE did Ozzfest. They did the inaugural *Headbanger's Ball Tour* with Shadows Fall and Lamb Of God. They tour like it's going out of style. We spoke to KsE's resident Renaissance Man, the talented Adam Dutkiewicz, about the wild ride that his band has been on. *Editor's Note: Adam D. is a regular comedian, and most of his answers were given in jest.*

What side project? We have no side project. We did. It was something for fun, called Burn Your Wishes. We're busy now, so it was something we did for fun. "Let's make music together."

Tell me something about KsE that I wouldn't know by looking at the band or by listening to **The End Of Heartache**.

We're all losers! [laughs] We're all average guys. We spend our off time with arm-wrestling competitions and eating chicken wings at the same time. I am so in the mood to eat chicken wings right now, it's ridiculous. There's a Hooter's around here. But I am not into Hooter's at all. I don't go to strip clubs, because I don't like girls flaunting their stuff around me and there are so many gross dudes there. The girls see you watching them and they watch me watch them, and I feel creepy. Ew. I feel dirty. I am so not a typical guy. I feel like a dirty, creepy dude. I hate sports and cars. I am pumped that Boston won the World Series, though. I lived in Boston for 4 years, and I went to games. I don't think I am ego-crazy, either. I'm not like, 'Oh, I am cool because I am in a band.'

Describe the essence of the band's sound.

Oh, that's easy. There's some riffs. There's some screaming. There's some blick-um, blick-um, blick-um, which is drums. There's some 'Argh, Argh, Argh,' which is screaming. There's some 'neeedly, needly, needly, needly' sounds, which is guitars. There's also chugga, chugga, chugga for the guitar riffs.

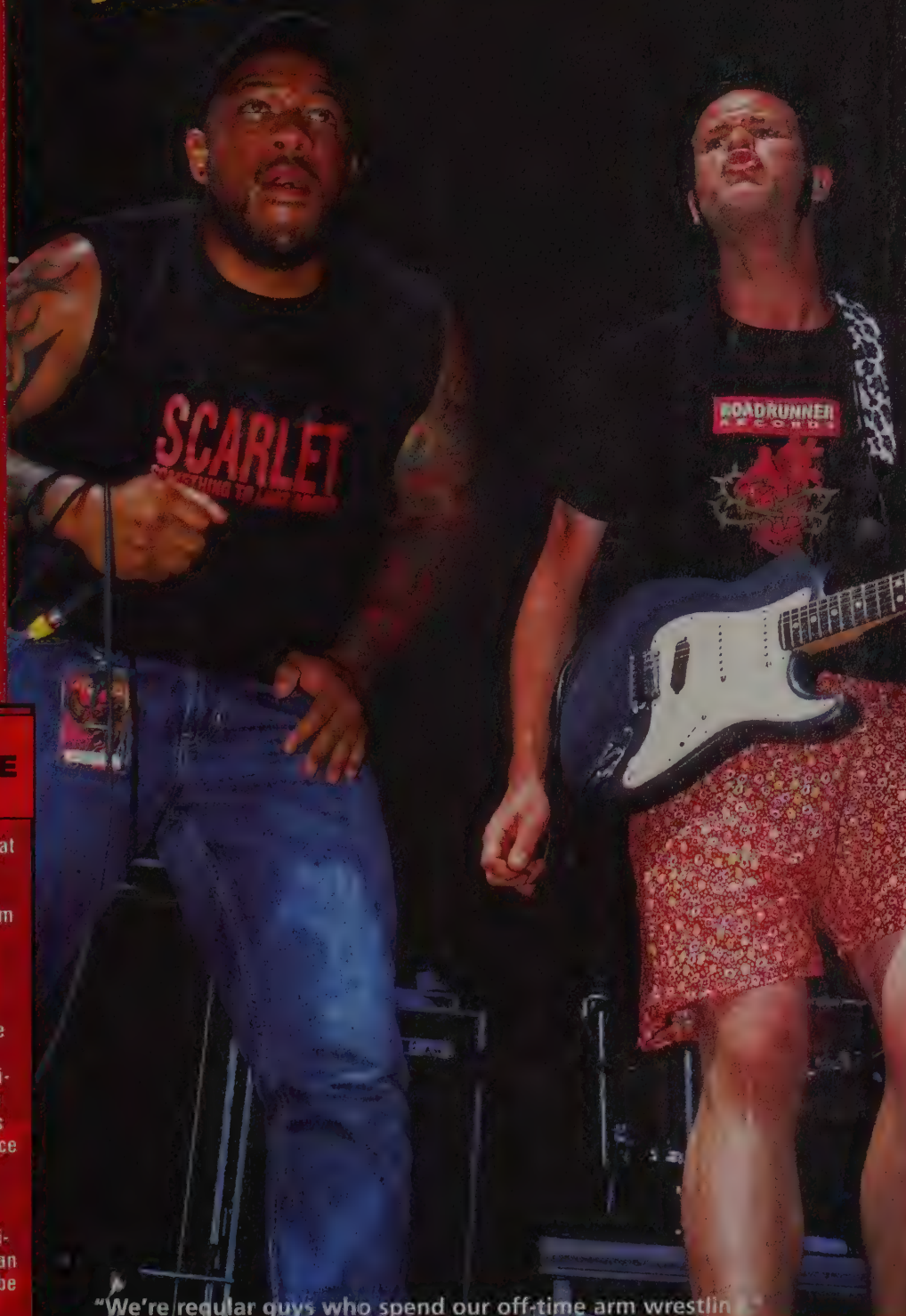
KSE's ADAM D. TALKS ABOUT HIS HOME STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS:

"Dutkiewicz was born and bred in the great state of Massachusetts. 'I am from Western Massachusetts, from Northampton. It's a two hour car drive from Boston.'

"According to Dutkiewicz, there's a lot to love in Boston. 'The scenery and the weather is nice,' he says. 'It's a pretty place, where I live. A lot of the people are cool. The state of mind is typical New England. It's slightly uptight, but the political state of mind, I like it. It's what I have been around my whole life. There are lots of good places to eat. I know the best place to get chicken wings. It's called The Hangar in Amherst. It's wicked guy.'

"Since Thanksgiving is a holiday readily associated with Mass, we asked if the guitarist if he would have been a pilgrim or an Indian back in the day? 'I guess I would be a Pilgrim, because they wore black. And they had guns,' he laughs.

"I DON'T KNOW WHY PEOPLE LIKE US."



"We're regular guys who spend our off-time arm wrestlin

Only Sweden's masters of technical metal—that would be Meshuggah—could release a 21-minute song called *I* and keep listeners glued to their speakers. The release, a one-off issued by Fractured Transmitter Records, the brand new record label owned and operated by former Mushroomhead frontman J. Mann, is a single song that moves in many moods and parts. But in typical Meshuggah fashion, the song never gets boring or predictable. Meshuggah know how to make an endeavor such as an EP that is really just a very long song work. We spoke to guitarist Marten Hagstrom while he was in the studio in his native Sweden, where Meshuggah are recording their highly anticipated next album, *Catch 33*. Hagstrom opened up to *HIT PARADER* about the challenges of making a 21-minute song, and the future of Meshuggah from a musical and a business perspective.

HIT PARADER: *I* is about a protagonist who thinks he is either the bringer of the apocalypse or humanity's savior. What a predicament! But I guess it's easy to solve such a dilemma in the space of 21 minutes!

Marten Hagstrom: Lyrically, it's a bit obscure. But it boils down to the mind trying to decide whether or not he is a lunatic or if he is the genuine power of evil and the nemesis of mankind. It

"I IS ABOUT A PROTAGONIST WHO THINKS HE IS EITHER THE BRINGER OF THE APOCALYPSE OR HUMANITY'S SAVIOR. WHAT A PREDICAMENT!"

came to our bus a lot, and a great friendship grew there. We were going to do a headline tour in the States, and we had no merchandise guy, so we called Jason and asked if he could recommend a merch guy, and he said, "I'm not doing anything right now. I'll do it." So he sold merch for us on that tour, and that's where we talked about that idea.

HP: So what's next for Meshuggah. Are you still looking for a label?

MH: Yes and no. Right now, we're in the process of working on the final record on our contract. We are writing and recording right now. This will end the contract that we've had for a long time with Nuclear Blast. It's a hell of a long time to be with a company, and we actually thought we were out of the contract an album ago, and we got into a dispute with the label over it, but we didn't want to go into court. We're already famous for being slow in putting out albums, so we wanted to break the trend! Getting into a legal battle wouldn't help our case or speed things up. It would drag out and no one would benefit! We decided, "Let's just make a killer album."

HP: Do you think this release will confuse your fans? Since it's not a proper album and because it's on a new label?

MH: It's hard to anticipate what people will think. It feels like this band has a tendency to release stuff that

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

MESHUGGAH

STILL GOIN' CRAZY

worked out in this manner, because of the simple fact that this type of song, or whatever you want to call it, this piece of music, is so long. It's 21-minutes, so it's easy to get conceptual about the lyrics. It's a form of inner turmoil.

HP: *I* is a 21-minute song that feels like an EP; it does not feel like one big long song. It's got so many parts, and movements. It goes from typical Meshuggah 'walls of noise' riffs to quiet parts. Why is it just one long song?

MH: There were a bunch of reasons. When we were approached by Jason of Fractured Transmitter Records. [Editor's Note: Jason Popson is the real name of former Mushroomhead singer, J. Mann, he wanted his first release to be a Meshuggah release, he wanted to kick things off with us. We discussed it jokingly. We didn't know if it was possible. We were under contract to Nuclear Blast and it might have been a problem to release a full length on any other label. He said, "Throw together a project with a couple songs, like an EP." We didn't want to just write 2 or 3 songs, so we started thinking it over and we did a real experiment, to see what we could do with 21 minutes of music. It was an experiment. We wrote the first few riffs, then the first few minutes, and the format of the EP made it easy to do and easy to write. We knew how much time we had to work with. I can see from the outside, how someone might think a 21-minute long song would be a major task to pull off, but that made us able to do it. It was a huge inspiration for us.

HP: How did you hook up with Jason?

MH: We hooked up with Jason from doing Ozzfest in 2002. He approached the band, and Mushroomhead are nice guys, who are really into our music. He

always throws people off, every time we release it. It doesn't matter to us. We want people to like our music, but we do what we do, and *I* is really in that vein, so to speak. It's something that stands for what we've been doing the last few months. Releasing a 21-minute song is a statement in and of itself. We're proud enough of it to not care that people will get thrown off by it! We like the material and we think our fans will, too.

MARTEN HAGSTROM WEIGHS IN ON MESHUGGAH'S FAMOUS FANS!

- Jack Osbourne and the Deftones are noted Meshuggah worshippers. Deftones guitarist Stephen Carpenter has said in the press that Meshuggah are his favorite band. When asked if he would like to be in Meshuggah, the guitarist said no, because he doesn't think he is good enough to play in Meshuggah. That's some serious Meshuggah-worship.
- Of the accolades that other bands bestow upon them, Hagstrom says, "We would be stupid if we didn't enjoy the fact that other musicians like our music and get excited about our stuff. It's gratifying that the praise is coming from peers!"
- During Ozzfest 2002, when Meshuggah were one of the three side stage headliners, Jack Osbourne was often spotted standing on stage, watching them perform.
- Meshuggah singer Jens Kidman lent his vocals to *The Dream Is Over*, a track on the most recent Mushroomhead album.



MESHUGGAH



Wednesday 13 made quite a name for himself when he burst upon the metal scene

two years ago as the vocalist in the Murderdolls, the campy, creepy, crawly retro-rock unit fronted by Slipknot's Joey Jordison. While that band's focus was initially—and understandably—on Jordison, by tour's end Wednesday had made quite a reputation for himself as one of hard rock's most charismatic (and downright scary) personalities. So it seemed only a matter of time (and an on-going Slipknot touring cycle that has kept mastermind Jordison away from the Murderdolls' thrown) to inspire Wednesday to try something on his own. Well, the results of those efforts can now be heard throughout the singer/guitarist's first solo disc, the appropriately titled, **Transylvania 90210—Songs of Death, Dying and the Dead**. Aided by guitarist Pig, drummer Ghastly and bassist Kid Kid, Wednesday 13 has created one of the year's strangest metal collections. But in his case, should we have expected anything else? Recently we talked to Wednesday about his music, his background and his fast rising star in the hard rock galaxy.

'I'm a guy who's totally obsessed with things like horror movies and cartoons.'

Hit Parader: How would you distinguish the music on **Transylvania 90210** from what was done on the Murderdolls' debut, **Beneath the Valley of the Murderdolls**?

W13: I look at this album as a very natural progression for me and the music I make. Obviously, Joey isn't involved with this, so a major component of the Murderdolls isn't present. But vocally there are naturally some similarities between the two album since I am the vocalist on both. There are also some similarities with the music I made with my first band, **Frankenstein Drag Queens**. But there are more differences than similarities. The sound of the album is very different, and the lyrical

approach is a bit more extreme.

HP: In what ways is it more extreme?

W 13: I'm a guy who's totally obsessed with things like horror movies and cartoons. A lot of that came through in the Murderdolls, but here it's taken to another limit—or *past* any limit. I designed this album as if each song was an episode of some Wednesday 13 TV series, **Transylvania 90210**. That's why there are song titles like *Look What the Bats Dragged In*, *The Ghost of Vincent Price* and *Post Mortem Boredom*. Each of those songs stems from realities that go on inside my head. Maybe they're realities just to me, but they're realities just the same.

WEDNESDAY 13

BREAKING ALL THE RULES

BY RANDY SMITH



HP: Let's go back in time a bit. Tell us about your history.

W 13: I was born in North Carolina, and I still have a home there. It was a nice place to grow up, but I was a bit of a strange kid... surprise, surprise!! I'd rather hang around the house and listen to music or watch TV than go outside and play. I'm a prime example of what the influences of rock music and television can do to a kid who has no plans to become a doctor or lawyer or fireman. I always felt like I was growing up inside a television show—one that I was creating in my own mind. This album is kind of an extension of that belief.

HP: When did you first get into making your own music?

W 13: I've been doing this for a long time—since I was about 15. As I said, I was never a very conventional kid, so pretty early on I recognized rock and roll as being the ideal outlet for the strange thoughts running through my head. I took the name Wednesday 13 a decade ago, and it comes from the old *Addams Family* and *Munsters* TV series—the Munsters lived at 1313 Mockingbird Lane, and the Addams Family's daughter was named Wednesday. Then in 1996 I formed my first band, Frankenstein Drag Queens from Planet 13. We put out four albums—all on indie labels—and did a lot of touring.

HP: Did that band lead directly to your joining the Murderdolls?

W 13: Yeah, it did. Tripp Eisen, who was in the Murderdolls at the time, had heard some of our albums and was interested in me joining the

band. Originally I wasn't supposed to be the vocalist; over the years I've gotten to be pretty good on guitar and bass, so I was asked to join the band as the bassist. But after a short while things just sort of evolved and I was asked to become the vocalist.

HP: Do you think the success you had with that band has made it easier for you as a solo artist?

W 13: Oh sure, it has. The same label that has the



**"I RECOGNIZED
ROCK AND ROLL AS BEING
THE IDEAL OUTLET FOR THE
STRANGE THOUGHTS RUNNING
THROUGH MY HEAD."**

Murderdolls

signed me as a solo performer and released *Transylvania 90210*. That would never have happened if I hadn't been in that band. And because of what the label learned about me and the music I make a few years ago, they have a much better understanding of how to best market what I'm doing now.

HP: Your look, as well as your sound, has drawn comparisons to everyone from Rob Zombie to Marilyn Manson, with the assorted Twisted Sister and Alice Cooper mentions thrown in for good measure.

W 13: I see some of those comparisons more than others. Anyone who has ever loved rock and roll, and wanted to have some fun with it, is someone that I can admire. Certainly Rob Zombie is someone I admire greatly. He has many of the same influences that I do—especially when it comes to horror movies. But the song *I Walked With a Zombie* that's on this album isn't about Rob Zombie... it's inspired by a movie with that title that came out in 1943.

HP: Just as Joey Jordison was constantly bombarded with question concerning his return to Slipknot during his Murderdolls stint, do you expect the same line of questioning now about your returning to the Dolls?

W 13: I certainly expect there to be another Murderdolls album, and I expect to be part of it. I'm not sure exactly when any of that will take place, but I know it will. That's why I'm totally focused on *Transylvania 90210* at the moment. I know there will be a time and a place for everything, and when Joey has the time to focus on the Dolls again, I'll be right there along-side him.

BY: AMY SCIARRETTO

STRAPPING YOUNG LAD

Strapping Young Lad frontman Devin Townsend is up, and surprisingly lucid, at 9 AM. Not many rock musicians see daylight, given their schedules, the touring lifestyle, and their general abnormal way of doing things.

Townsend says, "My brain functions like an 18 year old instead of a 33 year old when I get up this early." Well, we're just glad that Townsend's brain functions at all, after listening to the chaotic, nerve-racking yet fully cathartic experience that is SYL's new album, **Alien**. It drove us delightfully crazy to listen to it; we can only imagine how delightfully crazy the person who *made* this music must be!

"When I am done making SYL records, I want to do mellow stuff," Townsend explains. We don't blame him, because **Alien** is so noisy that it's as irritating as it is exhilarating. Townsend, often considered a madman because of his musical mayhem and wizard-like look, intended for **Alien** to be all noise. "Strapping started as a forum to make as much noise as we wanted. There is no ceiling. We have all this digital gear that we didn't have access to when we started. I had one sampler. But with all this equipment, it's even more of a musical forum for doing whatever we want to do, without regard to anything."

Townsend, who dabbles in several projects, including the un-SYL-sounding Devin Townsend Band, certainly is self-aware when it comes to his music, because it certainly flips the bird to form and structure. We found ourselves giggling at some of the nonsensical lyrics that pepper **Alien**, and the maniacal Townsend says that, too, was intended.

"I don't know what I mean in my lyrics," he cackles. "Your guess is as good as mine. The dubious part of being the singer is that you have to write lyrics. SYL is all about energy. And noise. What would be cacophonous and over the top? With that in mind, I strung together a bunch of those words and said, 'Those will work.'"

Furthermore, Townsend says cryptically, "[The album] is an exercise in not knowing what's going on!" But there's nothing cryptic about SYL or **Alien**. It's just about getting together and making noise. While SYL allows Townsend to exorcise the demons, he takes it down a notch with other projects. "I'm lucky enough to do this for a living, but I have not picked a super lucrative genre, so I have to do 12 projects a year," he explains about his multi-tasking endeavors.

But he never burns out under the workload. "My only responsibility is to give the projects 120 percent, and if that leads me to scream your sac off, then I do that," he says.

"I'm lucky to have a place to vent through music. There is no 'poor me' about it. I give SYL 100%, then spend a month in Snoopy pajamas trying to get into a better head space! You have to be strong, and bounce back or you'll never enjoy the cool stuff that comes with the industry."

Speaking like the mad genius he is viewed as, Townsend says, "I use the phrase, 'Use your delusion.' Everyone is messed up. You get strength you get from going to the delusional place and then getting out of it altogether." He may seem a little off his rocker, but who isn't a little crazy? At least we can all relate, can't we?



STRAPPING YOUNG LAD FAST FACTS:

- Devin Townsend Band is the opposite of Strapping Young Lad. "It's love songs, ballads, and songs about relationships, things that don't have that dark vibe. It's like a heavier Def Leppard," Townsend says.
- People say Townsend looks like the Crypt Keeper. He's not offended. "I wanted to have long, cool hair parted over the eye, the one-eye thing," he laughs. "But then I went bald."
- Strapping Young Lad features legendary drummer Gene Hoaglan (Dark Angel, Death, Testament) and Byron Stroud, who now plays bass in Fear Factory.
- Townsend is *not* the 'alien' referenced in the title. "At the end of recording, I have this weird, alien feeling in me. I am from a shitty suburb in Vancouver, not from outer space."

KARL SANDERS

Karl Sanders, guitarist for South Carolina death metal band Nile, is in a hotel, with his bandmates. They're crashing at Extended Stay West in Colombia, South Carolina, two hours away from their native Greenville. They are working on their newest album, which'll be out on Relapse shortly.

Sanders is quite the charming chap. He talks about *Ghostbusters*, the *Sponge Bob* movie, and David Hasselhoff, not standard topics one discusses with a death metal musician. He just released **Saurian Meditation**, an album he calls "evil world music designed to put you in some sort of trance. It's all part of the gimmick. In order to sell my evil plans to take over the world, I cannot let people know I am an evil despot, so I put on this nice guy act."

See what we mean by charm? Anyway, **Saurian Meditation** has a Middle Eastern vibe, and it sounds like something you'd listen to while browsing incense or a magic shop. But Middle Eastern is a heritage that Sanders does not have. "I have a German background. Nile's original drummer, who was Lebanese, introduced me to Middle Eastern music and Lebanese music. When I'd go to his house for dinner, there were huge celebrations with piles of food and music, so it was an instant blast of culture." Sanders explored the sounds beyond that cultural experience. "It isn't what you hear on the radio and it's fun," he says. "I don't play music because I have some dream of rock stardom. I play it because I live it and I breathe it. That love has sustained us through many hardships and obstacles. For Nile, to come out of South Carolina, you are doomed from the start, so we do what we want, because we are damned anyway."

But that attitude, and courage to explore, are what set Nile, and Sanders apart from their peers. Nile have always incorporated a world music into death metal, which isn't common and isn't seamless. It stands out. It has to. How does Sanders reconcile his main job of making blazing death metal riffs with the lush, rich, mesmerizing textures on **Saurian**? "Well, I'm a Gemini," he laughs. "It's very easy for me to take the Zen like, yin-yang approach. The death metal is ferocious, but I cannot live that 24-7. I need some peace and quiet. This music was what I played to relax, have fun, and take a break from death metal. It's still dark, and a little bit evil. You know those meditation tapes people buy? I imagine this being mixed in with old lady yoga tapes and having them mesmerized by the laser beam for their own evil purposes." Of course, Sanders tongue is pressed tight against his cheek with all this "evil purpose" talk. In actuality, it's all inspired by cartoons.

"I'm also a father to a 9 year old kid, so I watch cartoons and there are many times that an evil guy wants to take over the world. It's 95% of the plot of most cartoons. Like Doctor Evil of *Austin Powers*."

Meditation, silence and cartoons are not hallmarks of death metal, but it's about the balance for Sanders. "It restores a healthy balance, and helps me appreciate death metal more. It's utterly

KARL SANDERS FAST FACTS:

- He's a Gemini, and his birthday is June 5. He is not a native South Carolinian. He is from San Francisco.
- Sanders likes movie scores, so those were an influence. "It could be used as a movie score to something. When I listen to this album, I get little pictures going on. The music tells a story."
- Sanders wrote all the music on **Saurian Meditation**. "It doesn't matter if it sells or not. It was music I make to relax, and I am sharing it with whoever wants to listen. It's not grand."

brutal to make a death metal album. I have satisfied my cravings for quiet, and now I am ready to do huge crushing death metal."

HIGH ON FIRE

Music saved High On Fire guitarist/vocalist Matt Pike's life. You see, Pike was a handful in his youth. He was sent to military school. His mom couldn't handle his misbehaving ways, and he was shipped off to California to live with his dad. He tried to be a good kid and went to college (studying Jazz), but he dropped out in order to tour with the stoner rock band Sleep. Of the whole military school experience, he says, "It was boring, in the middle of Kansas. I wanted to escape a few times. We had to do push ups endlessly."

But the gift of music, helped him straighten up and fly right. He played guitar the entire time he was in military school, and one of his teachers allowed him to instruct the guitar class, which filled him with self-confidence that many youths don't ever experience.

Look at him now! Today, Pike is making a dark 'n doomy racket



HIGH ON FIRE FAST FACTS:

*Pike has been playing guitar since he was 8 and developed his metal style by playing Exodus and Slayer covers. Horns up!

*We asked Pike exactly what **Blessed Black Wings** look like. He envisions them as "big enough to weigh you down. They'd be attached to your back like angel wings that don't work anymore." So they'd be pretty but not functional? Whatever the case, we'd love to wear a pair!

*High On Fire are a trio.

with High On Fire, an Oakland-based band that just released **Blessed Black Wings** (Relapse), a guitar-driven slab of fuzzed, distorted sludge rock influenced by the not-so-bright side of the world we live in.

"The world is dark at the moment, although I am drinking imported lite Jager, so there is light at the end of the tunnel," Pike, who describes **Blessed Black Wings** as "thrashier" and "less doomy" than its predecessor and "heavy and progressive without being mathematical, laughs. "There is so much personal and political adversity in the world. That's what inspires the images on the album. Also, it takes a lot to be on the road all the time. It can be a heartache. When you're not on the road and you have to dig ditches for a living, and you know you want to do something better than that, you do what you have to in order to survive, so the songs that you write go with those themes."

Pike does install sprinkler systems when he's not detonating venues with High On Fire's thick, raging rock. "Yeah, I dig out sewer pipes, and put in new ones. We do some cool work. We built a staircase out of railroad ties that went down a hill. We used blue rock, stamped it all down. We do custom landscaping and it beats the

crap out of you. I go to band practice without showering after work, and I am there till 1 AM. Then I go home, wake up at 7 and do it all over again."

That's the schedule of a man definitely possessed by his drive to make his music. Of High On Fire's mission, Pike says, "We're a bunch of comedians. It's a rolling comedy show. We take ourselves seriously, but not too seriously. It's good to have fun while you play. There's intensity, and I mean what I say and we mean what we play. We're humble. We're self-explanatory; we don't dress it up in a bunch of make-up. We're doing it because we love it, not to be rock stars."

SWARM OF THE LOTUS

Baltimore based band Swarm Of The Lotus reminds us of mid-'90s nosy, post hardcore bands like Deadguy and Coalesce, bands that undoubtedly influenced today's crop of rockers. They also conjure up images of the technical, yet artistic noise of bands like Dillinger Escape Plan and Meshuggah. That's certainly good company to be in, but SOTL are humble boys who just want the world to hear their music.

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SWARM OF THE LOTUS FAST FACTS

- SOTL claim "making new friends is the best part of being on tour. We all look forward to seeing the good people we know out there - and getting to know those other good folks we have yet to meet." The band heartily encourages fans to approach them (and other artists, for that matter) because we're all normal people!
- SOTL explain that theory of "white becoming black" is about "that point in your life where everything great turns completely sour, like a downward spiraling sort of feel."
- SOTL have already recorded a new album and will release it with a new label soon!

"We like to think that we play a variety of different styles that any fan of heavy, aggressive music can relate to," says singer Pete. "Hopefully, other people would agree. We just want to rock everybody!"

Those are lofty ambitions to have, but we think that the deafening, thinking man's metal that explodes out of the speakers when you spin **When White Becomes Black** (At A Loss Records) will appeal to all factions of hard rock fans. The music is fierce enough to be wholly intimidating, but the singer shrugs off the notion that he or his bandmates are as ferocious as the music they happen to make, saying, "like most other sincere bands, we're normal guys who like playing music. Some people look at us and seem to think we're intimidating for some reason. Maybe because the music has a lot of intensity to it but we're just reserved and sometimes shy individuals. We're not bent on being 'metal,' whatever that means. We don't care for fashion or other trends."

Halleluiah! So many of today's young rock bands are more inter-

ested in the color of their nail polish as opposed to the structure of their songs, and that's what makes SOTL and **When White Becomes Black** such a gulp of crisp air in a stale music scene. This is a band that will work its way into the underground rock scene's consciousness on a viral level, through organic methods like word of mouth and touring. Thanks to songs like *Cherry Chocolate Salamander* and *From Embers*, SOTL show themselves to be as interesting as they are devastating.

Pete says, "We're trying to go out and play on as many different types of bills as possible, in the hopes of gaining fans from every type of scene out there. We have been determined since day one to take our music as far as we can and reach as many people as we can. We just love to play music and have made it our lives at this point. To us it's worth all of the money loss and member change issues that you could possibly have to go through."

That's the kind of dedication to its craft and work ethic that'll take SOTL far. Very far. Remember. You read it here first.

LINE 6

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POWER PACKED

Atreyu

BY ROY HAMILTON

Atreyu have felt the love emanating from those who appreciate their moody, melodic metal attack. They've also felt the barbs hurled at them by those who aren't quite as enamored with the emotive brand of mayhem that this So Cal unit creates. But either way, vocalist Alex Varkatzas, guitarist Dan Jacobs, drummer/vocalist Brandon Saller, guitarist Travis Miguel and new bassist Mac McKnight have grown to understand the truth behind the time-honored axiom, "love us, hate us... just don't ignore us." The yin/yang reaction Atreyu's music has created among members of both metal's cutting edge and the hard rock mainstream has helped make their disc, **The Curse**, one of the year's most talked-about hard rock showcases. That diverse response has also served to help make the band's road outings (including their appearances at last summer's *Ozzfest*) "must see" concert events for anyone even remotely interested in following what has been hailed by some as Metal's Next Great Band.

"Our music isn't easily explained or categorized... and it's not designed to be."

"It's been very interesting to hear the way people have responded to what we've done on this album," Varkatzas said. "I don't know if we were really prepared to have that many responses—and to have the wide variety of reactions, as well. The vast majority have been very positive, and we're all incredibly appreciative of that. But the funny thing is that those that haven't been as positive, I actually kind of understand. Our music isn't easily explained or categorized... and it's not designed to be. That bothers some people. They want to say, 'Oh, Atreyu sound like so-and-so.' When they can't do that as easily as they'd like, it annoys them."

The inherent dexterity of Atreyu's style obviously has more built-in benefits than detriments. It has allowed this Orange County fivesome to tour with heavy-weight friends such as Lamb of God and Slipknot as part of *Ozzfest*, and then turn around and hit the road with the likes of decidedly more palatable fare including Taking Back Sunday and the Used. Atreyu's ability to write, record and perform instantly memorable, stick-to-your ribs tunes like *Bleeding Mascara* and *Right Side of the Bed*, marks them as one of the few members of the current metal "underground" that seem to possess the musical goods needed for major cross-over success. And while **The Curse** is on its way to selling nearly 250,000 albums, this quintet sense that they may be on the verge of something much greater.

"We believe that we have the ability to appeal to a lot of fans," Varkatzas said. "At least we *hope* we do! We bring everything we've got when we're on stage, and because of

that some of the more melodic things on the album become some of our heaviest songs on stage. They take on a life all their own. It's funny how our ability to write good songs and then play them really well has pissed off some people in this business. But that's fine with us. They're a little jealous of all the attention we've been getting. As long as our true fans are getting off on it, we can live with just about anything that anyone else has to say."

Ever since they began their quest for public acclaim back in early 2000, Atreyu have seemingly derived particular pleasure from presenting music that's boldly worked against the grain of traditional metal ideals.

Since the emergence of their ground-breaking 2001 EP, *The Fractures in the Facade of Your Porcelain Beauty*, this unit has done just about everything in their power to create a sound vocabulary distinctly their own. Blending strangely-tuned guitars with powerful rhythms and their hypnotically transcendent melodies, the group has continually managed to expand their audience while never taking more than a measured step towards full commercial sell-out. It was that delicate balance that helped turn their debut disc, 2002's **Suicide Notes and Butterfly Kisses**, into an underground phenomenon. And it is what promises to makes **The Curse** one of the year's most successful heavy metal showcases.

"Considering where we've come from, it's kind of amazing to consider where we are," Varkatzas said somewhat cryptically. "I don't think any of us would have considered that **The Curse** would become as successful as it has. Once you sell a couple of hundred thousand albums, there's a certain level of accomplishment that you feel. There is definitely a

very cool thing about knowing that many people are excited about what you're doing and have gone out to buy your albums. But at the same time, it makes us realize how much more can still be accomplished. It's like we've cleared the first hurdle—which is a major task all by itself. But when you

look up, there are about 30 more hurdles standing in front of you. The more of them you can clear, the more successful your band is going to become."

While their song writing ability, teamed with their non-stop road work, have combined to make Atreyu one of the season's break-out success tales, there's no denying the role that last summer's *Ozzfest* played in helping shoot this unit to the top. Quite simply, the opportunity to perform in front of thousands of fans on a daily basis is one this band will always hold dear. Despite having to go on as early as 9AM on some days (an ungodly hour even by non-metal standards!) this unit clearly made the most of the opportunity presented them, not only bonding with their fellow rockers, but proving to a Sabbath-loving, Slipknot-oriented crowd that they could hold their own with anyone.

"As long as we stay together as a band, that tour will stay with us as one of our fondest memories," Varkatzas said. "That's something I really feel certain about. Just being able to hang out with a lot of musicians you admire, and then having the chance to get up there and show what we could do gave us so much confidence. It told us that we belonged. We were probably one of the youngest bands on the bill. We're all in our early 20's... or younger! A lot of the guys even in the Second Stage bands have been doing this for a long, long time. A band like Lamb of God has been around in one form or another for a decade! We learned from all of them, and maybe we showed them that Atreyu is a pretty good band."

A pretty good band, indeed!



ATREYU

HP

KORN

AT ROAD'S END

BY P.J. MERKLE

So Brian "Head" Welch has left Korn for "religious" reasons. Kind'a makes you think doesn't it? After more than a decade of playing with his musical "brothers" in one of the most successful bands in recent rock history, Head suddenly realized that he had experienced enough of playing what he termed "angry" music.

"Korn has parted ways with Head who has chosen Jesus Christ as his savior," a Korn-derived statement said. And just like that he was gone. Now we must all wait to find out where Korn heads next (pardon the expression) as they seek to find a replacement for someone who has played a vital role in shaping the sound that has helped this Bakersfield, CA-based sell more than 40 million albums world-wide during their historic run at the apex of the contemporary music scene.

Despite what some nay-sayers may be whispering, we can all safely assume that Head's shocking departure isn't about to spell the end of the line for Korn. It's widely believed that after taking a short break in order to regain their creative energy and reconsider their artistic perspectives, this hallowed unit will choose a new member and boldly rock on. What will make it all even more interesting is the fact that their next disc will signal the beginning of a "new era" for Korn—one in which they will have a new record deal as well as a new guitarist.

"This band is still strong," said vocalist Jonathan Davis. "I don't think anyone would question that."

Perhaps Davis won't come right out and admit it, but if truth be known, Korn's charismatic frontman seems to sense that with Head's departure and the success of their **Greatest Hits, Vol. 1**, the first era in this band's historic career has come to an end. Indeed, it would be nearly impossible for anyone that has followed this unit's rise to stardom to deny such a concept. With their **Hits** set both neatly summarizing their chart-topping victories, and ending their contractual obligations to their long-standing record label, Davis and his remaining bandmates—guitarist James "Munky" Shaffer, bassist Fieldy and drummer David Silveria—seem ready to boldly forge ahead into some uncharted territory... which includes the release of their next album on their own label.

"That's something we've been planning to do for a long time," Davis said. "We did just about everything involved with the marketing, promoting and recording of all our albums. Nothing

against them, but all the label basically did was press the discs and get them into the record stores. We can handle that."

So, even despite Head leaving, with their **Hits** collection proving to be among the most successful hard rock releases of the last year, and the band's recent road trek packing arenas around the nation, it would seem as if Korn are riding one of the best "highs" of their ever-inventive career. With their two recent cover tunes (Pink Floyd's *The Wall*, and Cameo's *Word Up*) garnering massive airplay on a variety of radio formats, and the DVD featured within their latest CD drawing rave reviews, these quintessential "new metal" rockers still seem to have it all going their way. But as so often seems to be the case in the unpredictable world of Korn, things aren't always exactly as they appear.

"On the surface things seem to be relatively good in the band right now," said an on-the-scene source. "Head's decision seems to have drawn them together. But sometimes with Korn—especially with Jonathan—it's hard to tell exactly what's going on. I think they're excited about the chance to have a lot more control over their future albums, but at the same time I think there's some understandable anxiety as well. There's been talk about doing a complete album of cover tunes, since the ones on **Greatest Hits** were such a success. But some of the guys just want to get to work on a new album."

It appears that once Korn adds a new axe master, the band will unify their creative vision and start kickin' out the jams on some fresh tunes. Whether it's on a full album of covers (which may include their previous tips-of-the-cap to Metallica and Morbid Angel) or their follow-up to 2003's commercially disappointing **Take A Look In The Mirror**, by late 2005 this unit should be well into the process that will eventually yield their next masterwork. And it's a safe bet that whatever creative choices they make, the resulting musical mix will have a major impact upon the thoughts, deeds and actions of the entire contemporary music community. After all, it's now an undeniable fact of rock and roll life that Korn are the most respected, influential and successful hard rock band of the last decade. The sound, the style and the attitude they bring to their work has allowed this trend-setting unit to

become the standard bearers against which all pretenders to their musical throne must be measured.

Their past albums—such as **Life Is Peachy**, **Follow The Leader**, **Issues** and **Untouchables**—have each sold millions of copies. Their ever-inventive tour packages have helped to make

Korn one of the most significant on-stage forces in the rock realm. And their one-step-ahead utilization of a wide variety of both on and off-line

promotional vehicles have labeled them as the ultimate "new age" metal band. Yet for all their influence and all their success, there's no doubt that a number of key questions now surround Korn as they prepare to embark on their next era. Can they regroup after Head's departure? Can they reverse their recent downward commercial trends? Has the emergence of younger, heavier, more metallic bands—ranging from Slipknot to Shadows Fall—impacted upon Korn's artistic influence? Has a decade of hard rocking, fast living and big money robbed this unit of their rock and roll drive? It seems as if these guys have an answer for just about any question we can dream up!

"When you do what you love, it all doesn't seem like that much work," Fieldy said. "We've all been able to maintain a great friendship within the band, and that's allowed us to keep our focus and commitment. We've been doing this for a long time now, though in our minds I think we still look at ourselves as a young band with a lot more to prove. That also helps to motivate us. We know we still have a lot to offer."

"We've all been able to maintain a great friendship within the band."

"We just feed off of each other and the crowd."



JONATHAN DAVIS

HP

SKINDRED

IN TOO DEEP

"We've
been told
that what
we're doing is
just too
eccentric
for most
fans."



BY ROB ANDREWS

Don't try to figure out Skindred. Don't waste your time... or theirs. The simple fact of the matter is that the more time you spend trying to analyze the musical motivations that lie behind this unit's rich reggae-metal sound, the more confused and confounded you're liable to get. You see, the music created by vocalist Benji Webbe, guitarist Mikey Dee, bassist Daniel Pugsley and drummer Dirty Arya isn't necessarily

there to be scrutinized like a prize bull at the county fair. Rather, it's there to be listened to, enjoyed and absorbed into every corpuscle of your body.

As this highly distinctive unit wraps up their latest North American tour (on which they've supported Korn), they're sitting on the precipice of accomplishing more than what many within the metal community ever thought possible. But as their latest disc, *Babylon*, continues to sail up the charts, it appears as if this decidedly differ-

ent English unit is about to prove to a questioning world that their off-center approach can find a comfortable home within the hearts and minds of metal fans everywhere.

"We've been told so many times that what we're doing is just too eccentric for most fans," Webbe said. "But we've never listened to that. If we focused on trying to be incredibly successful I doubt if we'd be making the music that we are—or that we'd be enjoying it half as much. This is the music that we love—it's what inspires us

every day. We're very thankful that it's apparently found an audience that it inspires as well."

Their "inspired" audience has helped turn **Babylon**—a disc that was originally released two years ago—into a bonafide success. And with the more "extreme" elements of the metal community rising up to be heard more and more, it seems likely that this unit's power base will continue to grow in the weeks and months to come.

The reason? Quite simply, no one has ever heard

in late 2002 that Skindred's sound began to reach the levels attained on **Babylon**. Here, the band's reggae-punk-metal extremes reach a new level of maturity and fun, especially on songs such as *Nobody* and *Set It Off* where contrasting and apparently conflicting rock styles seem to magically meld under this unit's care-free control. Having already drawn comparisons to such rock notables as System of a Down, 311, Bad Brains and—believe it or not—the Police, Skindred seem ready-and-willing to once again push the bounds of rock and roll convention to their farthest

when **Babylon** was initially released, as well as on their run at that year's *Ozzfest*—marks them as that rarest of rock and roll commodities—something truly unique in a world dominated by by-the-book sameness.

"The way we look at it, there are two types of bands," Webbe said. "Those that *try* to be different, and the ones that *really* are different. We like to think that we fall into the latter category. We've had a number of people tell us that what we're doing might one day change the entire face of rock. I don't even know if we want to do that. All we really want is to have peo-



anything quite like this bizarre quartet where reggae roots blend with punk passions and metal mayhem to create one of the strangest melanges in the contemporary music world. Certainly this isn't for everyone, a fact known all-too-well by the group's members. But at the same time, this breaking-all-the-rules unit admits to be somewhat shocked that their defiantly avant-garde approach has found such a receptive response in so many metallic souls.

"Sometimes you're not supposed to try and figure certain things out," Webbe said. "We love our audience, but we don't try to figure out who they are and why they like us. We know we're different, and we assume our fans are as well. But that doesn't mean that they can't embrace other forms of music. In a lot of ways, that's the essence of what Skindred is all about."

This highly eclectic unit has been working on perfecting their idiosyncratic approach over the last four years. But it wasn't until Dee and Arya joined the band

imaginable boundaries... and beyond!

"For us, making music is almost all about the entertainment value," Webbe said. "How can it not be fun to have a band featuring heavyweight guitars and metal-like power that delivers their songs with an almost reggae-like vibe? We want to get the whole crowd into it—bouncing all around the building and making the place buzz with excitement. That's what the new album does when you put it on. We defy anyone to put on this album and then sit in one place while you're listening to it."

While some hard rock purists may cast a wary eye in the direction of this admittedly off-the-wall crew, it seems as if the periphery of the metal world—those folks not usually attracted to the form's strident sounds—have been drawn to Skindred like the proverbial bees to honey. With their flowing dreadlocks and unconventional DIY attitudes, there's no question that this band walks to the beat of their own drummer. Yet at the same time, the infectious nature of their sound—first presented in 2002

pie listen to what we're doing with an open mind... and enjoy it!"

So now that they're finally getting a shot at the kind of recognition they've long been seeking, how will Skindred change their fun-loving, anything goes attitude? Our bet is that they won't change at all! Sure, they had to wait two loooong years to have **Babylon** finally receive the kind of Stateside distribution they sought, but this crew believed the wait was well worth suffering through. Now, two years on, they've got an album to support and a basket-full on new tunes ready to go. Indeed, things couldn't be better in the wild world of Skindred.

"The old saying is that good things are worth waiting for, and we believe that," Webbe said. "We've had to wait to have our album heard by a wide segment of the music world, but that's okay. It's given us time to focus on new songs. Now we can tour for as long as we want knowing that we're ready to go when it's time to make another album."

"Those around me tell me that I tend to have a somewhat morose view of life."

Breaking Benjamin have done it. They've hit the rock and roll motherload by producing a sophomore album, *We Are Not Alone*, that not only has gone gold, but has also produced a hit single in *So Cold*. They've broken through on both radio and MTV playlists, making their faces as familiar as their sound to millions around the globe. They've wowed audiences with their on stage performances, first opening for the likes of Evanescence, and then hopping aboard the highly successful road outing headed by Korn and Chevelle. And they've been intimately involved in the release of the season's hottest video game release, *Halo 2*, for which they recorded their stand-out track, *Blow Me Away*. But all of this isn't really that surprising when you consider the expectations that vocalist, guitarist, songwriter Ben Burnley and his boys—drummer Jeremy Hummell, bassist Markus James and guitarist Aaron Fink—hold for both themselves and their music.

"The time since the album was released in June has been the best time of my life," Burnley said. "I'm not the kind of person who generally gets very excited about things. Actually, those around me tell me that I tend to have a somewhat morose view of life. But things have gone so well, that even I've been surprised. The response to *So Cold* was very rewarding, and the tour opportunities that have come our way have allowed us to continually reach new and larger audiences. And now, being involved with *Halo 2* has put a cap on everything. We play that game all the time when we're on tour, so it's like a dream to be able to contribute music to the game and soundtrack."

BREAKING

BENJAMIN

TOTALLY

BROKEN

Somehow, we think it's the people behind *Halo 2* who should be happy about getting a band as hot as Breaking Benjamin to work with them! Sure, the vid game has already sold over 2 million copies—with even more fans than that now hearing the strident strains of *Blow Me Away* (which, by the way, can also be heard on BB's recently-released EP, *So Cold*.) But it would seem that the Breaking Benjamin boys have given just as much as they've gotten from their pairing with one of the world's most successful video game franchises.

"At this point anything that increases our visibility is a major plus for us," Burnley said. "But we are selective. We'll only do things that we believe in—and this was definitely one of those projects. Sometimes they want you to sell your soul in order to make it in the music industry. We've never been about that. We've also been lucky in that we've almost always been able to work with the people and do the things that we believe in."

BY PETE MORGAN

For a guy still relatively new to the contemporary music world, Burnley has certainly begun to make his mark on the hard rock scene. With the wide-spread acclaim paid this Wilkes-Barre, PA-based unit thanks to their variety of recent successes, it appears like Breaking Benjamin has begun to realize their dream of becoming one of the most successful bands in the rock and roll realm. This unit's highly accessible—and highly eclectic—hard rock sound has won over converts from coast to coast, a fact not lost on those headlining acts that have asked the BB boys to join their various tour treks.

"The fans we meet at a Korn concert are a little different than the ones we met while touring with Evanescence," Burnley said. "They've all been great to us, but they are different. The Korn fans tend to respond best to the louder, faster songs, which isn't that surprising. We felt a little more comfortable with some of our emotive stuff with Evanescence—but both tours have been great."

While concert-going fans may be drawn to the likes of Jonathan Davis or Amy Lee, there's no denying that the focal point of the Breaking Benjamin experience remains the multi-faceted Burnley. Indeed, the guy has always seemed to have a special power for garnering loyal supporters. Back in 2001, when James and Fink (both of whom were then ensconced in the successful band Lifer) heard the music being created by their long-time friend Burnley, they decided it was time to leave their burgeoning group behind and make sure that as many people as possible got the chance to hear what Ben had up his sleeve. With the help of a supportive local Wilkes-Barre DJ, and a self-produced demo tape, soon over a dozen labels were showing up at Breaking Benjamin's showcase gigs—each and every one of 'em with a contract in hand. Soon these young musicians, as well as those around them, were all committed to the concept of "breaking" Benjamin and making him (along with the rest of the group) stars on the rock and roll scene.

"Everyone told me that I was crazy to leave a successful band," Fink said. "The general consensus is that lightning doesn't strike twice. But I never looked at it that way. Mark and I had known Ben for a long time, and had always loved his music. Everything he played sounded like a potential hit to me. So when the chance came to join up with him it seemed like the natural thing to do."

With influences ranging from Korn and Tool to Nirvana and the Smashing Pumpkins, Burnley's artistic canvas is already one of the most expansive in the contemporary music world. And as shown throughout *We Are Not Alone*—which follows the group's well-received 2002 debut, *Saturate*—this is a band that seems to have just about everything going for them. They've got great songs. They've got a natural flair for instrumental dramatics. And they've got an exciting, rock-solid stage presence that makes sure everyone attending their show is having a fine ol' time. When you add them all together, what you emerge with is a band that seems more determined than ever to "break"... and break big!

"For us, this is all pretty simple," Burnley said. "It's all about making the best music you can and entertaining the people. You do what you have to do. I think we've got enough originality so that we can pull off just about anything we want. But I've always found the music works best when you take a bunch of your favorite bands and then rip a little something off from each of them and end up with something totally new. All I know is that it works for us."



BREAKING BENJAMIN



FROM THE HP VAULT

Each month we bring you an incredible feature direct from the voluminous **Hit Parader** vault—an article that appeared on these hallowed pages exactly ten years ago! Without changes, editing or updates, these stories provide an amazing glimpse into this thing we call rock and roll, dealing with the form's most famous—and in some cases, infamous—stars. So direct from our May, 1995 issue is this “vin-tage” interview with the inimitable KORN.

Korn is one of those “cool” little bands that seems to be cropping up with increasing regularity on the rock scene these days. They don't particularly enjoy discussing their lives, their history or even their music. They feel it's just not hip to tell all their inner secrets or discuss the true meaning behind the lyrics of their hard rocking odes. But since this is a magazine, and you still can't actually *hear* the band's music on these pages (that technology is, alas, still a few months away), we figured we'd better do our best to drag vocalist Jonathan Davis, guitarists Brian Welch and James “Munkey” Shaffer, bassist Fieldy and drummer David (yeah, *just* David) to our ever-ready microphones so that you could learn a bit more about this truly special rock and roll unit. You see, Korn is a band that views life in a most unusual way. Their musical tales of woe and angst are often enough to make the likes of Vedder and Cobain seem up-beat in comparison. But as displayed throughout their self-titled debut album, Korn is a group with something important to say, and a very special way of saying it.

“We discuss things that we think are important,” David said. “Most of those

things are important to our lives—or things we find interesting; things like experiences I had in high school when I was continually getting picked on by all these jocks, or some drug problems that I had.”

Davis' words unfortunately leave as many questions unanswered as answered. Perhaps that's part of Korn's growing mystique. Unlike so many other rock and roll attractions, they don't want their faces plastered on some teeny-boppers' bedroom wall, nor do they want Beavis And Butt-head to be their video best friends. They simply want to tell their

somewhat sordid musical tales in relative peace. But from the nursery rhyme qualities of the darkly disturbing *Shoots And Ladders*, to the harrowing drug tales exposed in *Helmet In The Bush* (which in title alludes to problems Davis' had with his male organ following heavy speed use) Korn manage to convey much about their lives in every note they play and every word they sing.

“Discussing the music is hard,” Davis said. “Music should be listened to, and each individual interpretation of what it means is important. It's easy for me to say that *Helmet In The Bush* is about a





problem with speed that I had— but it might hit someone else a different way. I just felt it was important to tell everyone that speed takes your soul away, and on top of that, if you take it, your penis retracts severely. That's something everyone should know."

Korn has been working on their somewhat off-the-beaten-track musical approach for the last two years. It was back in early 1993 that the group's four original members (minus Davis who joined later that year) combined their diverse backgrounds, and wide ranging tastes, into a single musical entity. While

the band's two guitarists had known each other since childhood, the rest of the group's members were all relatively new friends, and a lengthy feeling out process began as soon as they started working together. The band soon discovered that their original vocalist wasn't the man for the job, and he was soon out and Davis was in. Almost immediately things started to click. Two weeks after the singer's arrival, the band had written and demoed such future album tracks as *Blind*, *Predictable* and *Daddy*, and two weeks after that, they played their first live show in Anaheim. Six months later, they had

landed a record deal.

"We didn't set out to get big record deals or make huge amounts of money," Davis said. "We all enjoy music and that's what we do— whether 20 people are listening or 20,000. I was born and raised in music; in fact, my family had a music store in Bakersfield. I spent all my time after school taking music lessons on piano, violin, upright bass, clarinet, trumpet and even a little bagpipes. In fact I play the bagpipes on *Shoots And Ladders*. I guess the point I'm trying to make is that this band is about music and nothing else."

LYRICALLY SPEAKING

the story behind the song

BY RENEE DAIGLE

WHY 1985?

"I'm more of a pop culture guy," reveals guitarist, vocalist, and songwriter Jarret Reddick for the Wichita Falls, Texas-based band, Bowling for Soup. "I am a child of the '80s, you know, I love the movies and television shows back in those days, and, I think it shows in my music that way."

Speaking of which, **Lyricaly Speaking** recently sat down with the comedic Bowling for Soup's frontman, Jarret Reddick to discuss his band's infectious 1985 tune as well as his songwriting skills, he even gave some songwriting advice as well as the inside scoop into the story behind 1985.

Jarret, was it hard putting the lyrics together for 1985 into a pop culture song? "Not really it just all flowed, you know. They seemed like obvious ones where they were just written, and they just kind of popped out. I wrote that song with Mitch Allan from SR-71, he actually came up with the *Nirvana/Madonna* rhyme—which I think is just genius!"

Is it hard crafting the story behind the lyrics? "Most of my songs are stories pretty much the way that I write. Pretty much made sense to make a song about one of the ladies that brings her kids to our shows these days. I mean, her kids don't think of them as the coolest of moms, but they are bringing them to a rock show, and, I think that's pretty darn cool!"

Jarret, do you have a specific format in mind, when crafting a story into lyrical form? "No, not really, I usually start with something either that has happened to me that I have seen somebody else go through in their life or whatever, and, I just take it and I start to write it. I like to take the story and change things around and play little word games, you know say things that could mean two to three different things, you know, I write like I talk, so up until this point it's been a real simple process."

So, tell us, Jarret, do you have a secret on making the words

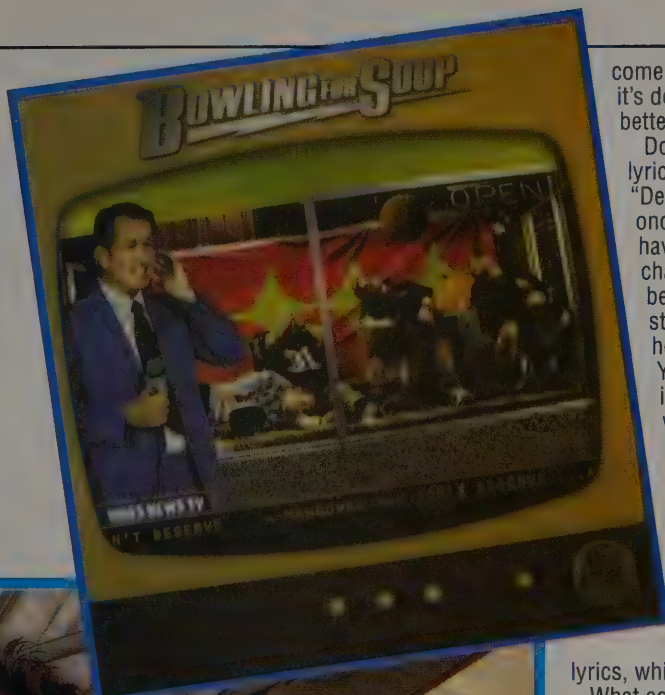
sound right when you're constructing a song? "I guess they're isn't a real secret. I don't know, if I had one, I wouldn't tell ya'. (Laughs). I think everybody writes different ways, which is why it's cool to write a song with another songwriter, because everybody goes through the process differently."

When it comes to songwriting process, do you have a certain way of writing, and if so, what does it entail? "I carry around a pad and paper, and when I have an idea, I'll write it down, and when, I'm really, really hardcore, I am in really into the process, I have a mini cassette player that I carry around with me and I can sing a melody into, or whatever. I just start with a chord progression or a lyrical idea; you know, sit down and do it. I'm not one of those guys that spend three or four weeks on one song... it pretty much comes out the way it's going to

For the latest info on Jarret (left) and the boys, please visit them on the web at www.bowlingforsoup.com.



Photo: Courtesy of Jive Records



come out pretty fast, and it's done. Some they're better than others!"

Do you obsess over lyrics, Jaret?

"Definitely not! In fact, once they're written I have a really hard time changing them, because, I usually get stuff stuck in my head it is what it is.

You know, when I'm in the studio, or whatever and there's the producer making a lyrical change or the guy from the label, it drives me absolutely nuts, because you're changing the chorus of the

lyrics, which are in my head."

What comes first the lyrics or music? "That's hit or miss, you never know! It could be a lyrical idea or just putting some chords together, you know, I really don't have any defined method; however it goes— it comes!"

Songwriting can be a real rollercoaster ride, what advice would you give on surviving "the ride?"

"Actually for me, I have really never had a block, I think the main thing is wanting to write songs for the right reasons a lot of times there is a lot of pressure for people to write a certain song a certain way, or repeat a hit. They way I approach it is, 'Hey, I'm making a Bowling for Soup album whether or not we have another girl the bad guys want on their hands or not, we still are going to make a great record.' Hopefully, we get on the radio and people will like the album, there's no guarantee, you know, so you have to write what you have to write, and hope that it catches on!"

On a personal note: "I would like to thank everybody whose been supporting us. We're lucky guys and we know that! A lot of bands don't get what we're getting, and we are very appreciative of that, and you know, we hope people will continue to like what we do," reveals Jaret.

For more information about **Bowling for Soup**, please visit them on the web at: www.bowlingforsoup.com.

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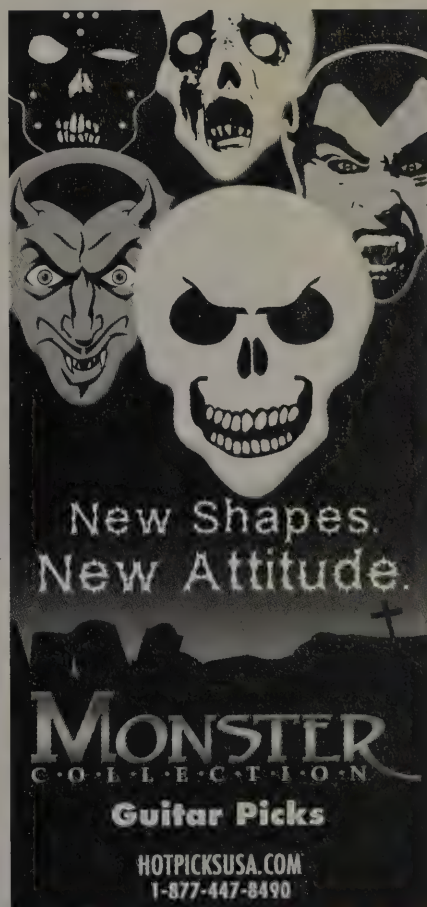
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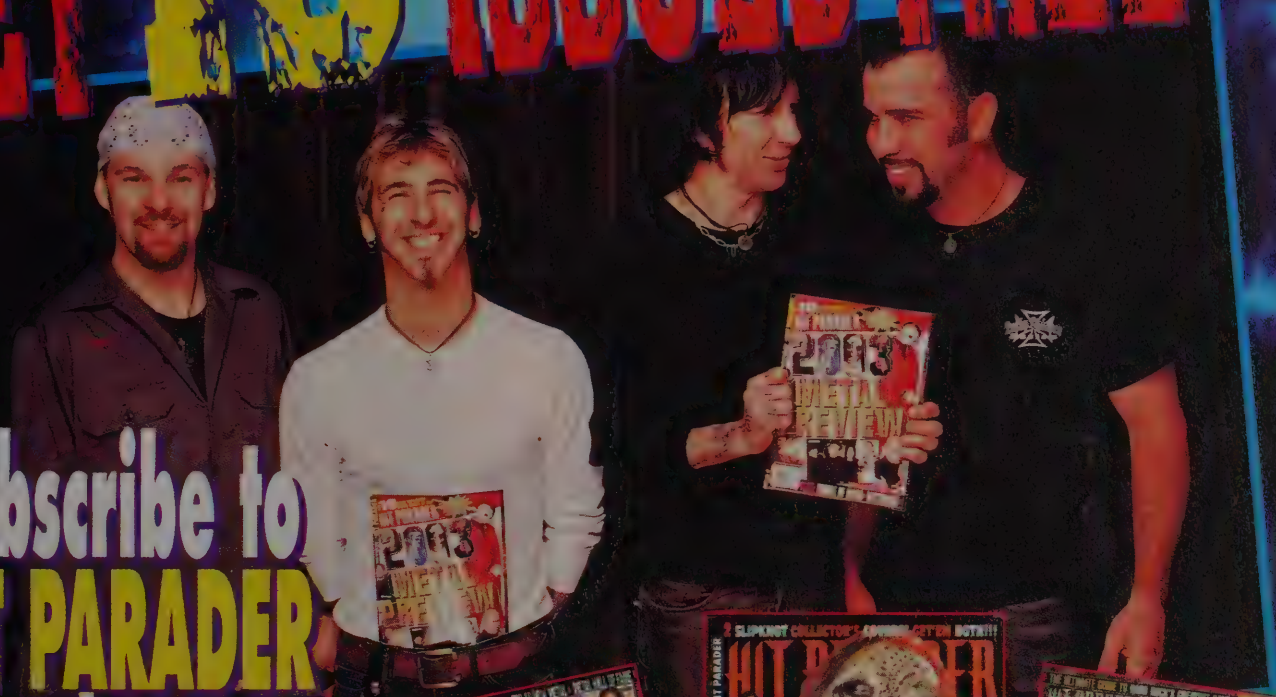
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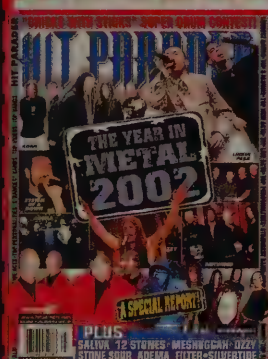
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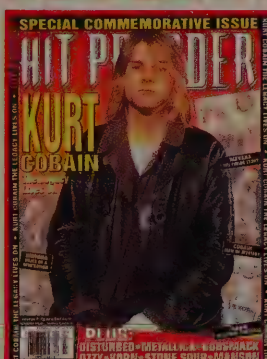
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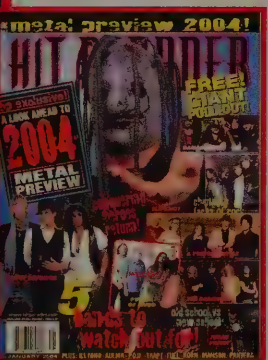
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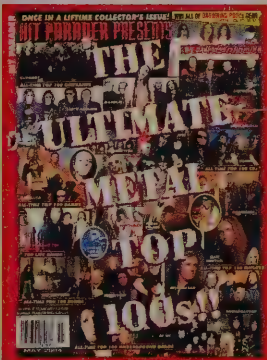
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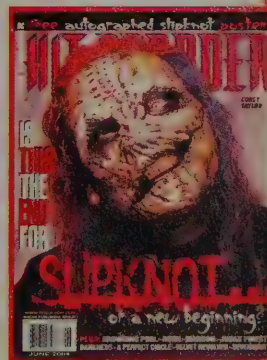
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SLIPKNOT & THE SUBLIMINAL VERSES TOUR!

POSTER MAGAZINE! 16 INCREDIBLE POSTERS PLUS OUTRAGEOUS INTERVIEWS!

Slipknot are back on the American tour trail, causing the kind of heavy metal havoc that only this nine-man band from Des Moines, Iowa, can create. Along with their road partners, Lamb of God and Shadows Fall, the Knot have turned their Subliminal Verses Tour trek into the year's must-see rock and roll event. For Slipknot this headlining, arena-filling State-side road jaunt comes as sweet vindication of everything this mask-wearing, coverall-bearing unit hold sacred. It proves once and for all that Slipknot stand as a united front, a band determined to bring their unique brand of metallic mayhem to every corner of the land of the free, and the home of the brave. We all that in mind, Hit Parader proudly offers this salute to Slipknot's historic road venture with this "live" Subliminal Verses Tour poster special featuring 16 incredible posters, amazing interviews and eye-popping in-concert photos.



OUT OF THE LIGHT... INTO THE DARKNESS!

They're the hottest band in the land, a guitar-toting, satin-wearing, hit-making, stage-stomping, chart-topping rock and roll phenomenon. Who else could we be talking about but the Darkness! Over the last six months, this British retro-rock quartet has revitalized the entire hard rock world with their vintage sound and over-the-top showmanship. Now, in honor of the Darkness' invasion of America, Hit Parader is proud to present our "official" 80-page salute to this totally unique rock and roll machine. Our special Darkness issue features 16 **INCREDIBLE POSTERS** of Justin, Dan, Frankie and Ed in their high-strutting prime, as well as exclusive interviews, contests and quizzes. It's everything any Darkness fan could want... and more! Order yours today!!

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MARS VOLTA

It could tell you that our Soundwave 100 watt combo pumps out the full-bottom that rockers must have. What it runs as quiet as the most discriminating engineer could ask. But let's face it, you know me on bass. So let's see what a more objective observer has to say at *Bass Player* magazine.

"Paired with the extension cab, the SW100 rig became a formidable and portable wall of sound, sending 145 watts through two 15" speakers.

"The SW100 has all you'd want in a mid-priced combo amp—a DI, a flexible EQ, a built-in limiter and an effect loop. Add the extension cabinet, and you have a big sounding rig for under \$700.⁰⁰," Which netted the SW100

Bass Player's Outstanding Value Award. In other words, it easily hits the full bottom line.



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FULL BOTTOM

TOYS IN THE ATTIC

THE COOLEST GAMES & GEAR

BY RENEE DAIGLE

PROJECT: SNOWBLIND

Project: Snowblind (Eidos) puts the gamer in the role of Nathan Frost, a 2nd Lieutenant of the Liberty Coalition. Nathan is mortally injured during a rescue mission; as a result he unknowingly undergoes a highly experimental procedure that saves his fleeting life.

The result of this procedure has changed Nathan into something super human. He is now the perfect weapons system with abilities that far surpass those of the average soldier!

In **Project: Snowblind** gamers will be exposed to a multitude of gadgetry and weaponry befitting a 21st century super soldier. These futuristic weapons are such fun, that the tried and true gamer will find this video game a must play!

For more information about **Project: Snowblind**, please visit them on the web at www.eidos.com.

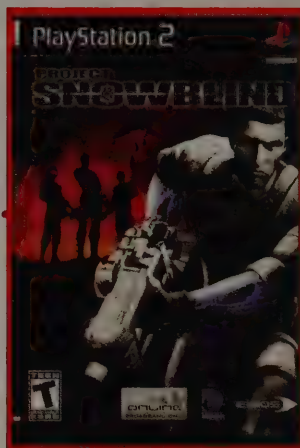


PHOTO COURTESY OF EIDOS

ENTER THE DRAGON

McFarlane Toys is breathing fire into their newest lineup—**McFarlane's Dragons: Quest for the King** toy line features five dragons, which we believe will set the Jurassic collection a-must have for any toy connoisseur!

Before the age of man there was a Golden Age of Dragons, intelligent creatures who ruled the Earth and were the first beings to develop speech and writing. The dragons were divided into clans, each with a specific role and specialty, and all led by an enlightened leader, King Draako. A great cataclysm struck the dragon nation, killing the king, destroying their civilization and causing the disappearance of the sole heir to the dragon throne, the king's son. The dragons that survived the great disaster fled to many hidden points of the globe.

Speaking of which, this sets up the first **McFarlane's Dragons: Quest for the Lost King** action figures series, which read as follows:

Komodo Clan Dragons are swift runners and climbers. They tend to be fierce and tenacious hunters with ravenous appetites—man-eaters. They live in burrows and caves, and may be the cause of earthquakes.

Sorcerers Clan Dragons are crafty and has kept alive a system of rune writing from the ancient kingdom. Members of this clan gain strength through the manipulation, assistance of control or control of powers beyond their own natural attributes.

Eternal Clan Dragons are domesticated



by humans. These dragons nest in the mountaintops, live in the clouds, thrive in thunderstorms, frolic in hurricanes and are sometimes mistaken for shooting stars! They rarely alight on the ground voluntarily.

Fire Clan Dragons are rarely sighted and with good reason. They're among the deadliest and most dangerous of all dragons. Dragons of this clan are great hoarders of wealth!

Water Clan Dragons are intuitive and empathetic dragons. Of course,



they're great swimmers and as

unpredictable as the oceans and seas themselves.

For more information about **McFarlane's Dragons: Quest for the King**, please visit them on the web at www.McFarlane.com.

FIGHT NIGHT

Get ready for the ultimate knockdown courtesy of **EA Sports** as **Fight Night Round 2** delivers the most realistic boxing punches known to the video game ring!

In this video game sequel, the gamer will not only be able to experience game play inside the ring, but outside as well! The game's unique features such as create-a-player, career mode, as well as the stunning graphics makes this video game so realistic that if you're a serious fighting and boxing aficionado—this one is a must-play!

For more information about **EA Sports Fight Round 2**, please visit them on the web at www.ea.com.

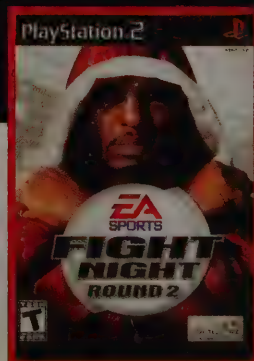


PHOTO COURTESY OF MCFARLANE TOYS

PHOTO COURTESY OF EA SPORTS

33 1/3



RAMONES

Ramones

(Continuum Books) is written by Nicholas Rombes. In this book, Rombes explores the history of punk and the Ramones' music. The book talks about their attitude, and how this band from New York inspired not only a genre, but a lifestyle as well!

RAMONES

This 120-page book is a must read, if you're an aficionado of punk music.

PET SOUNDS

Pet Sounds

(Continuum Books) is one of the most celebrated pop albums ever released.

This entertaining book was written by Jim Fusilli, who focuses on the emotional core of the album and on Brian Wilson's pitch-perfect cry of despair. In doing so, he brings to life the search for equilibrium and acceptance that still gives **Pet Sounds** its heart almost four decades after its release!

33 1/3



PET SOUNDS
by Jim Fusilli

33 1/3



LED ZEPPELIN IV

Led Zeppelin IV
(Continuum Books)

written by Erik Davis is about the infamous '70s band as well as the myth behind their awe-inspiring songs.

Led Zeppelin IV takes the reader on the writer's interpretations about

Zeppelin tracks, which leaves the reader questioning is this album an introduction into sort of an occult or is this album really about the brilliant lyricists who crafted these classic tunes!

EXILE ON MAIN ST.

Exile on Main St. (Continuum Books) was written by Bill Janovitz a.k.a singer, guitarist, and songwriter, Buffalo Tom; Janovitz takes the reader on a journey, recreating the experience of recording **Exile On Main St.** by the Rolling Stones.

In this fascinating book, you will dive-deep into each song individually, while Janovitz unveils the innovative recordings techniques, personal struggles, and rock n' roll mythmaking that culminated this pivotal album.

33 1/3



EXILE ON
MAIN ST.
by Bill Janovitz

MOVIE REVIEWS

RIDING THE BULLET

Riding the Bullet (Lion Gate Home Entertainment) is a movie which was taken from an e-book written by Stephen King. This film is about a supernatural drama that will terrify anyone who dares to watch it!

This horror flick stars Jonathan Jackson (**Tuck Everlasting** and **Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights**), David Arquette (**Scream Trilogy** and **Eight Legged Freaks**) and Barbara Hershey (**The Portrait of a Lady** and **The Natural**).

Alan Parker (Jackson) embarks on a 100-mile hitchhike to see his sick mother (Hershey) in the hospital and is picked up by a mysterious stranger (Arquette). As the ride continues, Alan uncovers terrible secrets that leave him with a very difficult decision—life or death for both Alan and his mother.

Riding the Bullet is based on Stephen King's anthology, *Everything Eventual*.

STEPHEN KING'S RIDING THE BULLET

with MICK GARRIS

THE
DEAD

TRAVEL

EAST

For more info. about **Riding The Bullet**, please visit them on the web at:
www.lionsgatefilms.com

COMING SOON...

Batman Begins (Warner Bros.) explores the origins of the Batman legend and the Dark Knight's emergence as a force for good in Gotham.

In the wake of his parents' murder, disillusioned industrial heir Bruce Wayne (Christian Bale) travels the world seeking the means to fight injustice and turn fear against those who prey on the fearful.

He returns to Gotham and unveils his alter-ego: Batman, a masked crusader who uses his strength, intellect and an array of high tech deceptions to fight the sinister forces that threaten the city.

For more information about **Batman Begins**, please visit them on the web at:
www.batmanbegins.com



PHOTO COURTESY OF LIONS GATE HOME ENTERTAINMENT

PHOTO COURTESY OF WARNER BROS.

TECH TALK WITH RAMMSTEIN

BY RYAN ABRAHAM

There can be no doubt that Rammstein stands as one of the most unusual and intriguing acts ever to hit the hard-rock mainstream. Whether your initial exposure to this incredibly idiosyncratic unit came via one of their chart-topping discs, their eye-popping live shows, their thought-provoking videos or their scent-stealing performance in the 2003 Vin Diesel movie showcase, *XXX*, there's no denying the hypnotic appeal that this German unit exudes. Considering the fundamental metallic elements that comprise the approach utilized by vocalist Till Lindemann, keyboardist Flake, guitarists Richard Kruspe and Paul Landers, bassist Oliver Riedel and drummer Christoph Schneider, Rammstein just might rank among most unlikely success stories the metal world has ever seen.

"The rest of the world looks at America very differently than Americans do."



"Success has always been such an interesting concept to us," Kruspe said. "Of course we like it and we want it, but it has never been a primary motivation. When you approach what you do from the perspectives that we do, success has never been a primary goal. We always believed that we were simply too different to ever be fully accepted—especially by fans in places like England and America. Thankfully, we have been proven wrong."

In many ways it would seem as if Rammstein have done just about everything in their power to avoid attaining such international acclaim. By steadfastly refusing to sing in anything but their native tongue, and by avoiding any trace of popular music "corruption" in their studio efforts, there's no question that Rammstein are not a band set to easily bend to American public demands. As shown throughout their latest disc, *Reise, Reise*—on which the band takes a back-handed slap at State-side culture with their scathing first video/single, *Amerika*—this is a unit determined to defy societal stereotypes and industry expectations whenever possible. And, as Kruspe was eager to explain, the members of Rammstein enjoy tweaking the noses of those around them, as long as it doesn't hurt *too* much.

"We have received some criticism for *Amerika*," he said. "But that was to be expected. 'It does present a view of your country that much of the world seems to hold—that American culture is very pervasive. That is not a bad thing in some ways, but it is threatening to others who have a narrower view. We do make fun of that attitude when we have a variety of Third World people singing the song's chorus, 'We are all living in America' in English. That was a first for us—but it was what had to be done to make the song have the proper degree of impact.'" Indeed, one would be hard pressed to remember the last time a non-English singing hard rock band has made even the slightest impact on American

shores. But the fact that groups who present material in their native languages have traditionally struggled to gain a foothold on U.S. shores seems to have little impact on the Rammstein brigade. With their name translating into "ramming stone", and a sound that ruggedly fits that vivid word image, with *Reise, Reise*

increasing the acclaim the band has previously enjoyed with their 1998 release *Sehnsucht*, and its follow-up, 2001's *Mutter*, this sextet sees no reason to change *anything* about their unconventional approach. To their way of thinking, their sound—which in addition to featuring the expected guitar crunch, also presents an exotic array of whistles, beeps and techno-babble—is already too strange to meet conventional tastes. Certainly a little Germanic warbling added to the mix isn't going to have a radical impact on that perception.

"We have been asked if we changed anything on *Reise, Reise* in order to better appeal to English-speaking audiences," Kruspe said. "The answer must be no. We have

"Success has always been such an interesting concept to us."

PHOTO: ANNAMARIA DISANTO

"Being in the movie **XXX** made us much more famous."



enjoyed good success doing everything exactly as we do, and we see no reason to change. The German language is very suited to our musical style. It works almost as another instrument. We would never think of changing that."

As one might imagine, considering the band's staunch approach, and their reliance on both German language and heritage to inspire their music, the haunting images of Nazism and fascism have followed Rammstein around virtually from their formation back in 1993. Even the German media has set out to uncover the "true" meanings behind some of Rammstein's more controversial and mysterious songs— with no evidence

what-so-ever of Nazi leanings ever even showing up. In fact the band's members are as confounded as anyone as to where these false allegations first started. Some believe it may have to do with the cover art of their 1995 debut disc, **Herzeleid**, where the six shirtless, well-toned band members come across as poster boys for some new "master race." Others insist it's just the German media doing their best to cause trouble.

"It was all so silly," Krupse explained. "That was just a photo of us— not some political statement! The German media sometimes gets carried away with such things. There was even one critic who said that the way Till rolls his 'r's' when he sings is supposed to mimic the way that Hitler used to speak! How silly can they get? We've never really written a political song in our life, and we probably never will. Perhaps *Amerika* is as close to that as we will ever get! It's just reverse discrimination because we are German. Kraftwerk had the same thing happen to them 25 years ago. If we were Spanish or Dutch, there would be no problem."

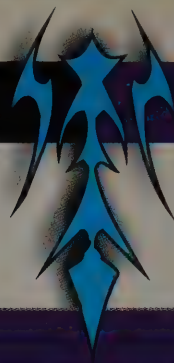
Still, with their harsh sound, their unusual lyrical approach, their penchant for utilizing fire during their live shows and their fondness for bizarre album

cover art, one can understand the askance looks often hurled Rammstein's way. It's been like that for this unit for more than a decade, and with **Reise, Reise** it appears it's not about to stop any time soon. But with their tightly synchronized guitar thunder, highly unusual keyboard passages and deep-throated vocal attacks, there is no way of mistaking Rammstein's approach with that of any other band!

"We don't really set out to cause much of a commotion," Krupse said. "We just like making music that's a little bit different. It's something we've been doing for many years, and we certainly see no reason to stop doing it now."

INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING

BY MICHAEL SHORE



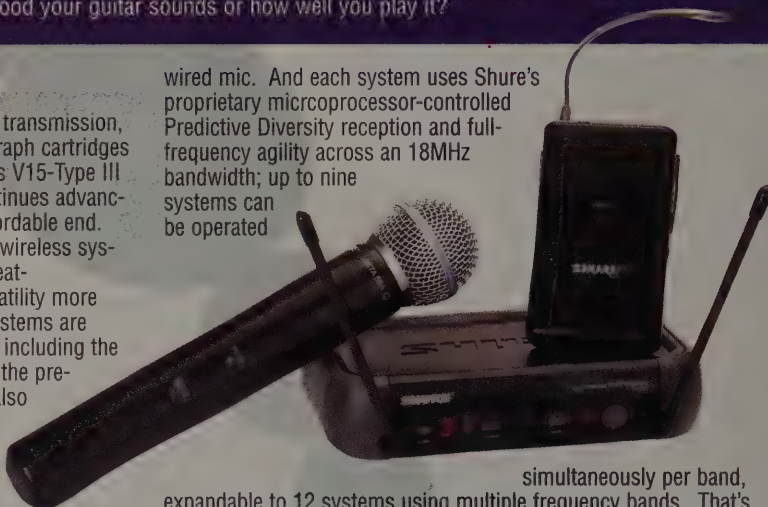
MICS

We usually cover guitars, basses, keyboards, and drums in this space - it IS called *Instrumentally Speaking* after all, and the focus on instruments you actually play seems only natural. But we also cover amps all the time and, on a regular basis, microphones and PA systems - and it's on the latter that we focus this month. Mics and PA's may be the most undeservedly overlooked corner of our little world, but there should never be an underestimation of their importance: after all, if you can't be heard in a club or hall, what difference does it make how good your guitar sounds or how well you play it?

SHURE

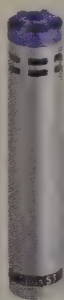
Shure - long a legendary name in high-quality sound transmission, from mics and PA's to a little something called phonograph cartridges (vinyl LPs have not completely disappeared and Shure's V15-Type III is a hall of fame "needle" to all vinyl aficionados) - continues advancing the state of the art at both the high end and the affordable end. And that applies to the latest major innovation in PA's, wireless systems. Shure's new PGX Wireless System sets a new great-sound/great-price standard, making plug-and-play versatility more affordable than ever. Among the eight different PGX systems are both handheld and bodypack models, with mic choices including the rugged PG58, the classic SM58, SM86 condenser, and the premium Beta 58A. Bodypacks include a Guitar System (also for basses), Lavalier Vocal System (with an SM93 lav mic), Instrumentalist System (with Beta 98) and Headworn System (with a WH20 mic). All provide eight hours of continuous transmission from a pair of AA batteries. All provide crystal-clear full-fidelity sound thanks to Shure's patented Audio Reference Companding technology - which makes the wireless link sound more like a traditional hard-

wired mic. And each system uses Shure's proprietary microprocessor-controlled Predictive Diversity reception and full-frequency agility across an 18MHz bandwidth; up to nine systems can be operated



simultaneously per band, expandable to 12 systems using multiple frequency bands. That's probably a whole lot more than anyone would ever need - and all at prices that start at just \$558. For more info, head online to www.shure.com.

beyerdynamic

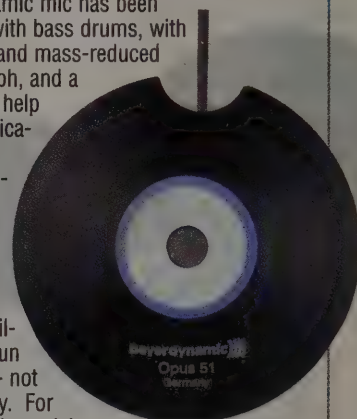


What else is there to mic besides vocals, guitars, basses? Oh yeah - drums! Another great name in microphones, beyerdynamic (yes they like it with the lower-case "b" - and please note the last three letters of their name!), has its own terrific new set of mics, the Opus Series, designed just for drums and percussion and for the related area known as "boundary applications" - where handling sound reflected off nearby hard surfaces is a major factor, as in drum sets, acoustic pianos, etc. There are no less than five new Opus mics, three of which are tailored for specific parts of the wide sonic spectrum contained in any typical drum kit: the Opus 53 condenser is small and

short for unobtrusive positioning, with a wide frequency response and tight cardioid pickup pattern that make it ideal for use with snare drums and hi-hats cymbals; the Opus 88 is a condenser ideal for toms and snares, with an integrated preamp in its clamp (just don't let it get damp, champ! If it does, dry it under a lamp? Help, I'm getting writer's cramp...), and the



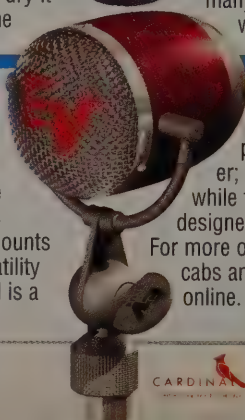
mic capsule mounted on a short gooseneck for optimum positioning; and the Opus 99 dynamic mic has been developed especially for use with bass drums, with a strong neodymium magnet and mass-reduced diaphragm to handle the oomph, and a hypercardioid polar pattern to help eliminate feedback in live applications. Other Opus models include the 83 studio condenser suitable for all instruments, and the 51 boundary mic, especially good for internal micing of grand and upright pianos, and laid inside a bass drum. The Opus series is available in a range of packs that run in price from \$649 to \$2,149 - not unreasonable, given the quality. For more info on these and beyerdynamic's many other mics and systems, visit www.beyerdynamic-usa.com online.



ELECTRO-VOICE

Finally, yet another great old name in mics is still making great new products: Electro-Voice, famed for its speaker cabinets, too. EV has two cool new mics suitable for both vocals and acoustic instruments, the Blue Series Cardinal and Raven. Both have cool combos of swivel-mounts and cymbal-stand-style lockable tilters for ease and versatility of placement, but there the similarities end. The Cardinal is a

high-performance cardioid mic with a Class-A discrete circuit, and pressure-gradient cardioid condenser; it's a bit more on the delicate side, while the Raven is a rugged dynamic mic designed for louder, higher-impact sound sources. For more on these and EV's many other mics, speaker cabs and more, check out www.electrovoice.com online.





A GUIDE TO THE LATEST GEAR



SPECTOR ARC 6 GUITAR

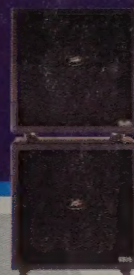
Stuart Spector Design's new ARC6 electric guitars are handcrafted beauties, their carved mahogany bodies holding hidden chambers for lighter weight and enhanced tone, select figured-maple tops, and necks of either mahogany or solid Honduran rosewood. Your choice of pickups from Harmonic Design humbuckers and Z90s, or EMG active-electronic humbuckers. Chrome-plated hardware, Gotoh mini-tuners, and Pigtail lightweight bridge tailpiece are all standard. Not exactly cheap at \$2699 list, but like we said, they're handcrafted beauties. For more on these and Spector's other fine guitars and basses, visit www.spectorguitar.com online.



ZIPPO TOUR

Attention unsigned bands! The Zippo Hot Tour is an online and offline event billed as "the only nationwide competition where the fans choose the bands," and you have until April 14 at 11:59:59 PM EST to register at www.zippohottour.com to qualify for the first round of competition. Two of our favorite instrument-makers are among those providing great gear for the prizes: Peavey and Pro-Mark. Grand-

prize winners will get Peavey 6505 and Valve King guitar amps and enclosures, Pro Bass bass amps and enclosures, ProComm wireless systems and PVM mics, cables and stands, and for the drummer, Pro-Mark cymbal bag, practice pad, brushes, and a year's supply of brushes with the winner's autograph on 'em! The Zippo Hot Tour offers a shot at national exposure for unsigned rock bands and will visit 10 cities before it's done: Austin, Charlotte, Cincinnati, Denver, Memphis, Orlando, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, and Raleigh-Durham. Hit that website for more and hurry!



HOTPICKS

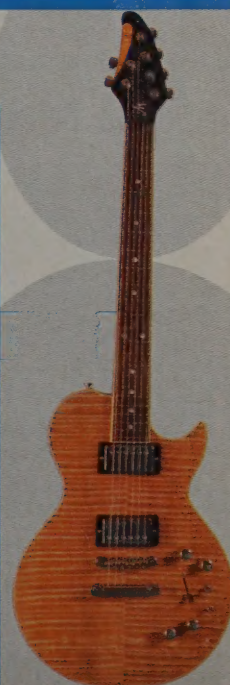
Hotpicks has a cool new line of guitar picks shaped like skulls, monsters, and devil heads. The look of Grave Picker, Horror, Killer, Li'l Devil and Vampire picks speaks for itself - but they also have some intriguing new shape and design elements that you can't necessar-



ily see with the naked eye. The Grave Picker, Horror and Killer picks are made of Delrin, the Li'l Devil and Vampire of nylon; all available in medium weight only for now, but in multi or same-color packs of 4 with color options in red, black, gray, white, and, of course, glow-in-the-dark. Four-packs retail for \$3.99. For more info check out www.hotpicksusa.com.

BRIAN MOORE I-GUITAR

Brian Moore Guitars, which has made some seriously gorgeous high-end electric guitars since 1992 - played by the likes of Motorhead's Phil Campbell and Jack Owen of Cannibal Corpse among many others — calls them "innovative guitars with vintage values." You could almost flip that around for their amazing iGuitar line: they look, feel, play and sound like ravishing traditional electrics, with gorgeous work-of-art bodies and finishes, top-shelf hot-sounding pickups, and options for RMC piezo pickup for warm acoustic tones and (here's where the "i" comes in) for 13-pin connector to access Roland or compatible sound-processing devices, external keyboards, or PCs with recording studio/notation software. As gorgeous and feature-packed as these beauties are, the i1000 line is priced at the jaw-droppingly reasonable range of \$595 for the i81 (figured maple top, bolt-on neck, fixed bridge, Classic Alnico humbucking pickups) to \$1,195 for the iGuitar 21.13 (adds the 13-pin connector and piezo pickup). The "i" stands for INSANE, as in insanely amazing prices (there is also a pricier i2000 line by the way) And now there's even an iGuitar.USB with direct USB connection allowing instant access, on both Macs and PC's, to popular recording software like ProTools, GarageBand and Logic, and effects programs like Amplitube and Guitar Rig. It's Class Compliant, so there are no special drivers to load, and it's bus-powered so no batteries are required, and it delivers a line level signal that needs no external audio interface or amplification. Like we said: amazing. For more info, head online to www.brianmooreguitars.com.



INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING



DRUM

PREMIER

Premier has been THE number one name in British drums even since way before the late great Keith Moon of The Who put em on the rock map (Phil Collins went on to endorse them for years with Genesis, too). Long known for ultra-high quality, the world's most luscious chrome-plating, and for popularizing the use of bright birch wood in drum shells, Premier now has a new deluxe series of snare drums featuring Craviotto solid wood shells. That's Craviotto as in renowned drum-maker John Craviotto, who's worked for many years with an American ultra-high-quality drum maker you may have heard of, Drum Workshop. There are two new models for now, added to Premier's Modern Classic line: the Solid Maple and the Solid English Walnut Limited Edition. Both are 14 x 5.5 inch models with single-piece Craviotto-designed solid wood shells and matching top and bottom reinforcing hoops, and Premier's specially designed Modern Classic bearing edge and snare bed design and gold-plated hardware!

The Walnut is a REAL Limited Edition: only 10 will be made! But Premier makes lots and lots of other drums and you can learn all about them all, online at www.premier-percussion.com.

DRUMWORKSHOP

Speaking of jazz-based stick sounds, Vater's new Splashstick Lite offers yet another in the ever-increasing range of softer sound colors between sticks and brushes - packing stick-like punch into the more delicate brush sound. Vater's "Whips" and "Acousticks" do it by bundling polybristles or polymer-wrapped thin wood dowels for a "semi-solid" stick, and Splashsticks do a similar thing in their own distinctive way, with 19 wood dowels bundled together for that warm 'n' fuzzy brush effect that still has a solid "crack" and can do rimshots. The new Splastick Lite uses smaller-diameter dowels for a lighter weight and sound and a thinner grip. For more info on these and Vater's wide range of "normal" sticks, mallets, accessories, etc., visit www.vater.com online.



PRO MARK

Finally, if you need to control and/or dampen the sound of your drums, Pro-Mark has a new product for you: Drum Gum, a specially designed rubbery putty-like stuff that can be cut to any size or shape and stuck on top or bottom heads without falling or bouncing off, to dampen unwanted overtones without deadening the drum's sound. It also works on cowbells, woodblocks, congas, you name it. Drum Gum comes in resealable packs of three strips at \$9.95 per pack. For more info visit www.promark.com.

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Matt McDonough
of **Mudvayne**
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Masters is the only Drum Series
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6 plies of 100% Maple

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Pearl

www.pearldrums.com



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Matt McDonough
MUDVAYNE

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PEDALS**

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